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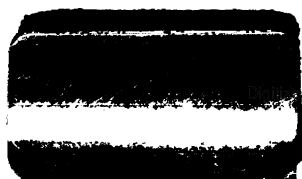
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THE **CABINET.**

THE
CABINET;
A
SERIES OF ESSAYS,
MORAL AND LITERARY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE CABINET.

LIII. JOURNEY TO THE COUNTRY.

O Rus! quando ego te aspiciam? Quandoque licebit
Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno, et inertibus horis,
Ducere sollicitæ jucunda obliviam vitæ?

Hor.

Venimus larem ad nostram,
Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto.

CATULL.

I HAVE now devoted my labours, for a considerable time, to the amendment of my fellow citizens in the ancient metropolis of Scotland. And although my residence has not been so constant as to forbid occasional trips to my paternal seat, and old hereditary trees, yet these visits have not been so long or settled as to interfere with my urban speculations. I have now, however, thought it proper to make a migration of a more deliberate and continued character. I have moved myself and family, for some time, to the country; and the present paper, and several of its followers, will salute my readers fresh from the groves and streams. Along with these romantic topics, will be mixed up a few notices of my worthy neighbours,

and their doings ; and of various other *memorabilia* in our parish ; which I trust will excite a becoming interest in the metropolis.

This operation, however, of removing to the country, though so shortly and easily expressed, does nevertheless include (as all masters and mistresses of families know to their cost) a legion of petty cares and troubles, which it requires no small temper, patience, and exertion to overcome. If any thing disturb the happy level of my sister's equanimity, it is the occurrence of such domestic movements ; and what contributes much to her impatience is the calmness with which I endure them. When I hinted this to her, a few days before our departure, in the way of example, she answered with some warmth,—“ Much merit you “ have indeed, brother, in your composure, when the “ whole burden lies on me. Nay, your want of thought “ makes things a great deal worse. There was but “ yesterday, when you brought home, without warn- “ ing, I don't know how many people to dinner ; and “ forced me to unpack the drawing-room carpet, and “ the china Mandarins, and the silver candlesticks ; “ besides borrowing our neighbour Mrs Fricandean's “ stewpan, and—in short, brother, I wish you would “ be more considerate.”—In these sentiments my sister is strenuously supported by ancient Grizel, the house-keeper (a matron of high consideration in the family,)—and indeed by all the domestics,—who, on such occasions of household movement, assume a bustle and importance which throw me quite under a cloud. Any unlucky forgetfulness of mine not only gives them ad-

ditional trouble, but betokens a want of respect for the serious matters in which they are engaged. They therefore fail not to give frequent hints of my inefficiency, and even hinderance, on such occasions ; and the very day before we left town, I overheard old Grizel muttering to my sister, that, for her part, she never could discover what use gentlemen were of in a family.

Grievous and manifold therefore were the doubts, and resolves, and changings,—the screwings and hammerings,—the lappings and wrappings,—and nailings and packings,—by which my household was agitated for several days before leaving town. First came the great and puzzling question, what things were to be taken with us, and what left behind. “ I think, Molly,” said my sister, “ we may do without the little bed in the blue room.”—“ O no, ma’am,” replied Molly, “ we had much better leave the *moreen*, for the blue is so nice and cool in summer ; and then there are the chair-slips to match.”—“ John,” said Judith, “ have you got the clothes-press and the band-boxes carried down ?”—“ Yes, ma’am, but the carrier says it is too big for his cart.”—“ Perfect nonsense !” cried Judith, “ he is always making one difficulty or another, to excuse his own laziness. I am surprised, brother, why you don’t employ the other carrier.”—“ Because, sister, I have always found this one honest and careful. But what, in the name of wonder, can you want with such a load of frippery ? Have you any thoughts of setting up a provincial theatre ?”—“ I beg, brother, you

“ will mind your own affairs. Would you have
“ one go amongst one’s friends in the country, un-
“ fit to make a decent appearance?”—“ Ah! sis-
“ ter, that unlucky phrase is made a cover for many
“ fooleries. But I hope you have reserved room some-
“ where for my CABINET, and a few books which I
“ wish to take.”—“ Cabinet?”—re-echoed Judith, “ I
“ declare, brother, I am amazed at you. Where do you
“ think we are to find stowage for such lumber? You
“ may as well talk of taking the Tron Church. And
“ as for books, has not Mr Whisk’em, the parish
“ schoolmaster, a very pretty collection in his parlour
“ window;—Robinson Crusoe, Nisbet’s Heraldry, the
“ Lives of the Saints, and I don’t know what all;—
“ besides the circulating library in the village, which
“ gets the Lady’s Magazine, and all the new no-
“ vels?”—Here my sister was interrupted by the en-
trance of John, who came to announce that one of
the band-boxes had burst, and was in the act of dis-
emboguing its contents on the kitchen floor. This
was too serious a matter to be trifled with, so she hur-
ried out of the room.

I overheard her, soon after, rating the poor carrier
for this disaster. “ ’Deed, ma’am,” said he, “ I’m no
“ used to the handling o’ sic paper wark. If it had
“ been a *corn-kist*, or the like o’ that, it would have
“ answered me better.”

We, however, at length completed our stores, weighed
anchor, and got fairly afloat, betimes in the morning;
my sister, myself, and our little boy, proceeding in our
own carriage; the subordinate powers following by

different conveyances. During the first stage, my poor sister's thoughts were so absorbed in the fear of having forgotten something, that she had neither ears nor attention for divers new and happy observations which fell from me, touching the state of the roads, weather, crops, and other such points of knowledge. While we stopped to breakfast, her apprehensions were sadly realized, in the missing of a bunch of keys of primary importance. So, after rummaging all places, likely and unlikely, unfolding bundles, turning out the contents of pockets, and exhausting herself in doubts and conjectures, she was obliged to return a note by the postboy, ordering a strict pursuit after the defaulters.

The weather was fine, and, as the day advanced, Judith resumed a little composure; although the remembrance of the keys would, ever and anon, intrude, like a passing ghost, across her peace. Our serenity was however interrupted by a new disaster, for the leathern straps which fastened on the trunks broke; and on searching in the carriage for ropes, to remedy the evil, it was found that they had been forgotten like the keys. We were accordingly forced to proceed very leisurely to the next stage, where our misfortune was amended. At setting out from this place, a horse was yoked to the carriage, who, though he had submitted quietly to the previous operations, when it came to the starting, refused to budge one step. In vain did postboys and hostlers use all the means of force or persuasion. In vain were whip and spur, and tugging and coaxing, alternately applied. The animal

did no violence, but remained steady to his point; till at last they were obliged to take him out, and put another in his room. "Obstinate foolish beast!" cried Judith, who was fretted at the delay. "On the contrary, sister," replied I, "I think him a beast of great judgment, and power of ratiocination;—for observe how he argues:—I get a sound drubbing for not going forward;—good:—but, on an average, I should get as much in the course of a long stage; so I am a clear gainer by all the trouble of the journey."—"Pshaw! brother," cried Judith, "you really take a pleasure in teasing one to-day."

This, and other small lets and impediments, prevented us from completing our progress till a late hour in the evening.

There is a pleasure in revisiting, after an absence of some time, a home endeared to us by habit and old recollections. We were too late and way-worn to enjoy this fully on the evening of our arrival; but I was stirring betimes in the morning, and before long had run through the whole house, and renewed my acquaintance with every table, chest of drawers, or picture which it contained. Methought they all received me with a grave and quiet welcome. I marked the minutest differences in their state or position;—observed that the old damask bed wanted its coverlet; that the high-backed oaken chair was removed into the lobby; and that the settle in the parlour had a broken leg. I then issued forth to the stables and out-houses, the fields, the garden. Those of my honest and humble dependents whom I met in the

way received me with a cheerful smile, and kind though homely greeting, which was none of the least of my gratifications. On entering my sheep-park, to look at my matchless five-year-olds, whose flavour eclipses venison, I met the ancient shepherd. He approached, bonnet in hand, while his bald pate, sprinkled with a few venerable silver hairs, shone in the morning sun. "I'm glad to see your honour
" come back among us," said he, "and hope Miss Judith and Master Harry are pure and well. We've
" had a sair miss of ye all. We often wondered how
" your honour could stay away from so pleasant a part
" as this. Your honour will see a great change in
" a' thing about. The young filly's grown mouter big, and Hawky's calf's weell horned. Your
" honour would hear that old Touzer's gone;—poor
" beast, he never took kindly since you gaed away.
" But Dick the gander's living, and like to live, and
" comes down every day to the kitchen door for his
" corn. He's really a surprizable beast that, and has
" mair sense than mony a Christian body. I've kent
" him about the house this twenty year. And your
" honour would hear a' the news o' the town here:—
" How auld Elspeth's dead, and her daughter gane
" aff wi' a gypsey man:—And how Tam Cleg the
" chapman was put in jail for false coin:—And the
" Doctor's been up in London:—And Laird Little's
" son has come hame wi' a sight o' money frae the
" Indies:—And Miss Jenny, that held her head sae
" high, wi' her fine *tocher*, she's ta'en the Gauger
" ter a':—And—" "Very good, Isaac," said I, "very
" good;—But you must not tell me all the news at

“ once. How are the wedders coming on ?” “ Ou, sir, pure and fine :—Never was the like seen in this parish :—Sir William sent us twa o’ his braw Englishers,—his *South Downs*, as they ca’ them ;—but they are no to be spoken o’ wi’ ours, in the same day. I picked out twa to send back, by your honour’s order,—prime anes they were,—just for a bit brag ; —and I’m thinking they ne’er saw sic like at the Castle.”

On returning home to breakfast, I found my sister amidst a levee of visitors, pensioners, and patients ; which last class forgot not to declare how ill off they had been since Miss Judith left the country, as it was well known she had more skill than many a lawful doctor. This, I must whisper, is one of my worthy sister’s weak sides. She has a mighty notion of her skill in the medical art ; and, when in the country, prescribes for all diseases in the neighbourhood, whether among the two-legged or four-legged kind. She studies the *Encyclopædia*, and *Buchan’s Domestic Medicine*, and will even venture on a dispute with the village doctor. She collects herbs and simples ; and spends no small time in extracting, distilling, pounding, and compounding. In the course of these her ministrations, I allege that she has helped away with one old woman, two ill-thriven children, three calves, and a foal. But this charge she repels with indignation. And, at worst, I believe she only assisted a little what Nature would soon have accomplished for herself.

My good sister, on the present occasion, secretly took no offence at the compliments paid her by the levee

of patients, though she professed to disclaim all knowledge but in a few simple remedies. And as the breakfast hour was approaching,—and she is somehow rather shy of prescribing in my presence,—she dismissed her guests in the mean time; desiring them to call again when she had more leisure.

My little nephew had also his recognitions to make, both local and personal. He had been up at sunrise, and all about the home premises; but, after breakfast, I took him along with me on a more extensive peregrination. Our first destination was the Mill, which is planted in a romantic dell, about a mile from the house. Though the sun shone bright, yet, as we passed under the wooded northern banks, the long grass still looked hoary under the dews of morning. One of my younker's chief attractions to the mill was to see whether a tiny piece of mechanism, erected by himself and the miller's sons, was in good order. It was a Mill-wheel made to run in a crevice of the rock, through which a slender flow of water found its way; and the achievement had exhausted all the skill, both of head and hands, of the young mechanicians. Their meeting was most joyous on all sides. The wheel had been carefully tended in our absence, and was spinning on its axle as smoothly as the terraqueous globe. Master Harry now distributed some small tokens of remembrance (such as knives, fishing-tackle, &c.) which he had brought for his young companions;—the value of the gift being much enhanced by respect for the giver.

The site of this mill is a study for an artist, as a

close scene of wood, rock, and water. An amphitheatre of rising ground protects it from every blast. The river, after falling from a considerable height, rushes, in a confined but level current, amidst huge misshapen rocks;—alternately sliding in rapid flow, or diffused in deep dark pools;—till, somewhat farther down, it bursts away in a sparkling and noisy stream, encircling a beautiful holme, where the miller has his farm. One craggy knoll is topped by the mill; another by the miller's house:—While, from every crevice of the rocks, shoot up the natural oak, birch, and mountain-ash, and overhang the stream with their delicate foliage, and scarlet clusters. In short, I venture to say, though it is mine own, that a fairer spot opens not its treasures to the sun.

The miller received me with an honest welcome. In looking through the mill, he hinted that if his honour would be agreeable to give him a few spare trees from the Gled's wood, and stones from the quarry, an *outshot* might be added, of great advantage to the premises;—and his honour was not very repugnant to the suggestion. We next proceeded to the aforesaid quarry, where the bores and levels were proceeding prosperously, and disclosing a face of free-stone equal to Parian marble. From this I took my little boy to several of the tenants' houses around, in all of which he is known and welcome. Thence, turning homewards, we visited some of the humbler cottagers,—not forgetting old lame Rachel, who supports her widowed solitary age by all the work that her strength permits, and a little occasional help from

the mansion-house. I love to encourage this early connection of kind feelings, and good offices, between my youngster and those upon my land ; as it is probable that they may one day be dependent on him for much of their happiness.

LIV. A SUNDAY IN THE COUNTRY.

Dis te minorem quod geris, imperas ;
Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum.

HOR.

— The Pulpit, in the sober use
Of its legitimate peculiar powers,
Must stand acknowledg'd, while the world shall stand,
The most important and effectual guard,
Support, and ornament of Virtue's cause.

COWPER.

A FEW days after my arrival in the country, Sunday came round in due course, and we all prepared to go to church. The influence of this sacred day, when observed with a due mixture of strictness and indulgence, has been allowed, by all our moralists, to be greatly beneficial, even considered as a mere object of civil institution. Whether we regard it as an interval of labour to the most laborious of mankind : or as the means of stilling the worldly passions, elevating the sentiments, and exciting the social feelings of our common nature ; we must equally approve of the weekly recurrence of this day of rest and enjoyment. Even in towns these good effects in part fol-

low : but it is in the country that they are seen to their full advantage.

Our village and parish church are planted in a warm and sheltered nook, surrounded, on three sides, by a stream clearer than crystal, and musical and melancholy as Philomel herself. It was the site of an old religious foundation, whose inmates, having both the power and the skill to choose, generally chose well. The burial-ground slopes from the church to the brink of the river ; where many modest stones mark the resting-place of the forefathers of the hamlet ; and here and there some uncouth rhymes record the fall of a pious Covenanter before the troopers of the fierce Dalyell, or bloody Clavers. The villagers have been encouraged in a certain attention to neatness and order, in keeping this place of tombs ; which, without imitating the showy and garish ornament of the famous Parisian cemetery, still exclude objects of terror or disgust. The sentiments proper for such a scene are pious awe, solemn hope, and tender recollection ;—sentiments in unison with that great change which has happened to the tenants of the place, and which awaits ourselves :—and those associations are to be encouraged which rather alleviate than augment the natural horror at the contemplation of mortality.

In short, the general character of this tranquil spot harmonizes with the tone of feeling expressed in the simple and pathetic inscription of the Italian tombstones, *Implora pace.*

On getting out of our carriage, at the door of the churchyard, we found the families of several of our

neighbours just arrived ; and service not being yet begun, numerous were the inquiries and congratulations which passed between us. Nor were our humbler friends forgotten. Many of the honest rustics assembled in the churchyard came up with their cordial welcome ;—or modestly touched their hats in passing ;—and were greeted with corresponding good-will. While I asked after their families, or chatted about the crops and weather, I perceived that several of the goodwives got a secret word of my sister Judith, on matters *physical* and *pharmacopeial* ; wherein they exchanged significant nods and winks, boding no good to the bowels of the complainants. As for my little nephew, he is a favourite of old and young ; and ran about recognising his numerous acquaintances, whose pleasure at again seeing the *Young Laird* (for so they have the presumption to call him,—thereby settling all questions of matrimony on my part), was apparent on their good-humoured faces.

We were soon all seated in church. Few scenes are more pleasing to me than a country church, attended, as it should be, by the neighbouring gentry ;—the tenantry and labourers ranged round their respective landlords ;—the higher classes regarding their inferiors with a cheerful kindness ;—the lower looking up to those above them with respect unattended by envy :—While all feel the brotherhood of their common nature, in humbling themselves before that Power who owns no distinctions, as a passport to his favour, but those of piety and virtue.

In another respect this scene is pleasing : I mean

the signal improvement which has taken place, within these fifty years, in the outward appearance of the peasantry of Scotland. As to dress, there can be no question. The ancient threadbare coat, with pendulous sleeves, and back of portentous length, weekly drawn from the capacious chest where it had slept for generations ;—the close coif, homespun gown, and worsted plaid which enveloped the females ;—all these have disappeared,—and given place to the smart coat of best broadcloth,—the silk *pelisse* and bonnet,—in which the young rustics of either sex nearly rival the Laird and his Lady. But what is better still,—there is a manifest amendment in their looks and strength, arising from better diet, lodging, and clothing,—added to diminished hardship in infancy. They are plumper, taller, and more robust. We seldom now see those ancient figures, with skins ravelled like parchment, and heads shaking with palsy, so common formerly in our country congregations. There is, in short, among the people, a general improvement in health and comfort, very gratifying to those who remember their former appearance.

The above panegyric on the local distribution of a country church, I am sorry that I cannot extend to those in great towns. There, the progress of wealth, and taste for splendid accommodation, have led to a distinction of ranks, which has banished from churches of fashionable resort all the inferior classes, and driven them to places of worship frequented only by themselves. As the connection of landlord and tenant does not exist in towns, in the same form as in the

country, there are not perhaps the necessary elements for furnishing such a congregation in the one, as we find in the other. But I well remember the time when it was the common practice for the domestics of a family in Edinburgh to sit in the same pew with their masters, or in one immediately behind. This has been superseded by ornamented churches, and high seat-rents. On the one hand, the master grudges the cost : on the other, the servant would be felt, and would feel him or herself, an intruder amidst the gay *parterre* which blows in the centre of a city congregation. This separation of ranks is much to be lamented ; but it is easier to point out the evil than its cure.

Our clergyman, who is one of the best of his sacred function, (distinguished for merit as it is in Scotland), now ascended the pulpit, and began our simple form of worship, by reading out the psalm. The *precentor* (for so we name our clerk) chose for his tune one of those rich and touching melodies of the Scottish Church, commemorated by Burns in the *Cottar's Saturday Night* ;—which we often hear in the country, but never in town ;—and which combine the great requisites of music to be joined in by numbers, —beauty, simplicity, long-drawn notes, and a marked intonation. Our congregation sang as they ought to sing ;—in strict time,—in correct tune,—and with hearty good will. I delight to hear the solemn acclaim of their deep-toned voices. They are not, however, entirely uninstructed : for our precentor has his school of music, in which the most promising

talents of the parish are initiated in harmony together : and now, seated near him in church, they led, without superseding, the general congregation. We allow none of those *chromatic tortures*, or new-fangled tunes, usual in town churches, which throw out and silence the whole assembly, except the small band of professional adepts. We hear no suppressed quaverings, faintly stealing out, as if frightened at their own sound. On the contrary, our honest rustics raise the choral note in one loud and accordant swell : and the willing voice seems not unaptly to bespeak the sincere heart.

The clergyman now stood up, along with his congregation, and began his prayer. Some think that our Scottish reformers pared too close when they proscribed all written liturgy, or formulary of devotion ; and trusted for prayer to the discretionary or extemporaneous effusion of the clergyman. I own that I am somewhat of this opinion. The congregation joining personally in a known form of prayer, or response, fixes the attention, and inspires feelings of devotion. I am far from saying, however, that the English liturgy should be adopted by us, without manifold changes, curtailments, and expunctions. Its length and repetitions are excessive, and exhaust the attention.

On the particulars of the discourse delivered on this occasion, it is needless to enlarge. Suffice it to say, that it was at once fervent and rational ;—and this, I think, is to describe, in few words, what is most perfect in religious instruction ;—particularly when addressed to an audience on whom the plain

practical inculcation of their duties, religious and moral, must always be the object of chief moment. Indeed, it is perhaps not going too far to say, that of all the means which have contributed to the instruction and amendment of mankind,—and particularly of the lowest and least favoured classes,—nothing is to be compared in efficacy to this weekly exhortation, coming from an intelligent and cultivated mind ;—unfolding the duties of man from the oracles of God himself ;—and thence deriving the strongest sanction to enforce them. The peasantry of Scotland are distinguished from that of other countries by their intelligence, decency, and virtue. These qualities are the fruits of education ; and of all that constitutes education, this is perhaps the most important and valuable part.

The above reflections naturally lead to another,—I mean, the general character of the established clergy of Scotland : and it is with pride and pleasure that I express my conviction, that in no country, ancient or modern, did there ever exist a Priesthood more conducive to all the good purposes of that order, and more divested of its evils. Under the *good purposes*, I include example, learning, intelligence, and worth of individual character ;—combined with zeal for the welfare of their flocks, temporal and eternal : under the *evils*,—ambition, violence, and fanaticism, on the one hand ;—indifference, and neglect of duty, on the other. In general information, manners, and accomplishments, a material improvement has taken place, within my remembrance, among our clergy ; and is

daily advancing : and little do they know of human nature, who overlook the importance of this, in a refined period of society. It is the object of the Romish and Episcopal Church to secure, by a gradation of ranks, the mingling of the clergy with the highest orders of the state ; and hence to elevate it in the public esteem. But the elevation of some leads to the depression of others ;—and in Scotland we have preferred a moderate equality ; where all are decently provided,—none exorbitantly. But surely the chief want with us, is something which will still farther raise the character and station of the clergy ; and bring them still more into familiar intercourse and influence with the higher classes ;—for if looked down upon by the higher, they will not long be respected by the lower. This elevation can only be effected by increasing their attainments and their independence.

I may add, that the mode of supporting an Established Clergy by Tithes, which, in other countries, is the source of such trouble and offence, has in Scotland, by a simple rule of commutation, been divested of its most exceptionable features.

While on this subject, I can scarcely escape the thorny question of Patronage ; but am far from presuming to decide on a subject where wiser heads have differed. The few hints which I shall offer will, at least, possess the merit of impartiality, and the approximation to a *middle term*, which is commonly the best solution of human disputes.

My first observation is, that of all sciences, politics, or public policy, is the one, where experience is of the

most value, and theory of the least. Here, if anywhere, is the tree to be known by its fruit. Now, if the fruit of our present tree,—if the consequence of our law of Patronage,—have been, to produce a body of clergy excelled in character and usefulness by none that ever existed,—this, at least, yields a pretty strong presumption in its favour. Were a clergyman to be chosen by his flock;—besides the evils of ignorant, or precipitate, or passionate choice;—besides that utter contempt of responsibility which distinguishes all popular elections, where numbers support each other in their party feeling, to the exclusion of all sense of shame;—besides the mischiefs of canvassing, and manœuvring, and evil-speaking, and wrangling, and heart-burning, and litigation, (mischiefs which have been permanent in the few parishes which possess this mode of choice);—it seems clear that the character of the clergyman for independence and authority would be greatly lowered. In every parishioner he would view a supporter or opponent. To the first he could not administer deserved rebuke;—the second would reject his advice and consolation. Perhaps the best security for a proper choice, in this and similar cases, is, that it should be vested in one, or a few, subject to the control of public opinion.

But farther, in the choice of the lower classes there would be small attention paid to manners and attainments,—these being subjects on which they are incapable of judging. This would lead to a selection of men who were unfit for the society of the upper classes, and who, by their neglect, would be still fur-

ther degraded. Another consequence might follow. The landed gentry, finding that they had so little influence in the nomination of a Pastor, might begin to doubt the justice of their land being subjected solely to his support; and to hint that those who nominate should pay. It well deserves consideration, how this might affect the maintenance of an Established Church;—that great preservative of Rational Piety;—that best security against Irreligion on the one hand, and Fanaticism on the other.

But while I am of opinion that a system of popular election would (besides other evils) lower the Scottish ministry, both in character and usefulness, I am far from denying that the present practice might admit of improvement. That it is a sacred duty in every patron to be scrupulous as to the fitness of an incumbent,—and even to gratify, as far as possible, the wishes of the parishioners,—I readily allow. I further allow, that unworthy nominations have been made, from carelessness, or improper influence;—though the existing character of the Scottish clergy shews how rare these instances have been. But, to avoid the chance of such an evil, however rare, there might be lodged in the parishioners a right of objection, on cause shewn; to be judged of by the Presbytery, or other judicature at once knowing and impartial. This might lead to some squabbling; but to far less than would result from a popular election.

I now return from this long digression to the subject which gave it rise. After service was over, we gathered round our worthy Pastor, and exchanged

congratulations. He is a person of such attainments, that the gentry, in a manner, contend for his society ; which he gives us sparingly, and so as never to interfere with his sacred duties. Indeed, such visits are often turned to the exercise of duties the most important. The fortunes, the wants, and afflictions, of his humble flock, are made the subject of frequent communication :—he acts as a medium of kindness and beneficence between his richer and poorer neighbours :—and thus contributes to unite all classes in the bonds of Christian love.

LV. PRIVATE EDUCATION AND INDULGENCE.

*Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant.*

HOR.

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—As I perceive, by the account you have given of your family, that you are charged with the education of a young kinsman ; and as you hint that your discipline is not over strict ; I am tempted to send you some particulars of my own history, as a lesson to yourself, and those of your readers whom it may concern, on the fruits of early indulgence.

“ I was an only child ; and being left to the care of a fond mother, was brought up with all due attention to my wishes. My mother used to remark, among

her female friends, the extreme sensibility of my temper ; and, though she would say this in a tone of regret, it was plain that she felt a secret pride in the observation. This was soon found out by her friends, who, while they condoled with her, did not fail to add that such was the temperament of genius. In this she would acquiesce with a sigh ; and then, stroking down my hair, would make me repeat the soliloquy of Cato, or of young Norval, to the admiring visitors.

“ The sensibility of my temper, as I recollect, was chiefly shewn in an extreme fickleness, and impatience of contradiction. No trouble was spared to gratify my humours. Toys and amusements of every kind were procured, but soon lost their relish from the ease with which I obtained them. I was always longing for something new ; and if any opposition or delay interfered, it was attended with ebullitions of sensibility, by no means safe or agreeable to those within my reach. My mother, who was the head slave of my caprices, endeavoured to mould the whole family into a similar subjection. In this she partly succeeded : but when she happened to be absent, the servants would sometimes fail in the readiness of their submission. This used to provoke me to outrages, which she was fain to atone for afterwards by a bribe ; but, at the same time, she would not fail to rebuke the complainant for crossing a child of such acute feelings.

“ When the time of education arrived, my mother could not bring herself to trust me to a public school. Masters were, therefore, brought to the house ; the at-

tendance on whom was always a matter of favour and compromise on my part; and was shortened, postponed, or altogether omitted, on the slightest pretence.

“ At length my good mother died, and it became necessary for me to mix with the world. The change from the comforts of home, and the tenderness of parents, to the rudeness, bustle, and neglect of a public school, has been remarked by Mr Gibbon, as one of the most painful that we undergo in life. This is no doubt true; but the difficulty once got over, it smooths and softens down the after change which is to mingle us in the business of the world. I had received no such preparation; but passed at once from the indulgence of my early breeding into the whirlpool of mankind. I had accordingly to endure all the jostling and buffeting of that collision, without being hardened to it by experience.

“ As my education had been so much neglected, my guardians were doubtful of my fitness for any of the learned professions; and sent me to a merchant's counting-house, in one of the great trading sea-ports of this kingdom. You may easily guess the trials which awaited me there. I was ushered into a room among a dozen of other clerks,—many of them younger than myself,—but all with a satisfied briskness of look, and volubility of talk, which quite confounded me, and formed a striking contrast with the shyness, soreness, and despondency, which oppressed my spirits. I was straightway supplied with a pair of fustian sleeves, and set to copy invoices, letters, and bills of lading; or to cast up figures, in which I was surpassed by the low-

est boy in the warehouse. By way of relief from this sedentary labour, I was often despatched to the docks and quays, while vessels were unloading; and spent the day among porters, skippers, and tide-waiters,—weighing bales, swinging casks, or counting staves. In the course of these and similar homely duties my impatience would frequently break out. The other lads of the house, offended by my pride and reserve, took a pleasure in thwarting me. Hence arose various bickerings and heartburnings, which were followed by complaints to my master; and ended in explanations, rebukes, and sullen apologies. In short, I was soon utterly disgusted with my situation; and as I gave no greater satisfaction than I received, my master was glad to get rid of me.

“ I next resolved to enter the Army. I had become acquainted with one or two of that profession during my mercantile education; and could not help contrasting their easy disengaged way of life with the bondage to which I was doomed. I had scarcely obtained a commission, when my regiment was ordered to the West Indies, whither I accompanied it. On our arrival, after a tedious and unpleasant voyage, I found that there was no active service going forward; and the detail of common duty soon became intolerably irksome. Neither was I recompensed by the society in which I now lived. One who forms his opinion of military men from meeting with a few in mixed company,—and under the observances of polished life,—finds occasion to lower his estimate, when he sees them in the routine of the parade, the bar-

rack, and the mess-room. Some of my brother officers were men of low views and manners; and the person who commanded the regiment I thought both ignorant and despotic. As I had never learned either to control or conceal my sentiments, I made no scruple of saying what I thought; and questioned and criticised on points of discipline, where my only duty was to obey. Indeed, I frequently so slighted the orders which I received, as to be on the brink of serious disgraces. My assuming and unaccommodating temper, at the same time, embroiled me with several of the officers; and, though a few took my part so far as to say, that there were good points about me, if I had not been spoiled in my education,—I became generally disliked, and was obliged to sell my commission and return to my native country.

“ I now applied myself to the study of Medicine, for which I had imbibed a taste by conversing with the surgeon of our regiment. The ill habits of my early years now met me in a new form,—the inability of giving steady application;—for it is in the want of this power, as much as in mere defect of acquirements, that we feel the consequence of improper indulgence. I mingled, however, with my fellow students in the classes, the hospitals, the operation-room. But though less compressed into junction with others than in my two former callings, the infirmity of my temper still found scope for its indulgence. I was offended at the bustling equality of my fellow-students. I blamed the partiality of professors and lecturers, in giving undue preference to others. I was provoked at the little cere-

mony with which my opinions were treated. At length, in going through a public demonstration, I happened to commit a blunder, which set the audience a-laughing. No man will ever be good for much, who cannot stand being laughed at. But this was a lesson I had not learned. I rushed out of the room, in a transport of shame and rage,—sold my books,—and swore immortal enmity to the whole doctrine and discipline of Esculapius.

“ My next undertaking was the Law. The labour and difficulty which had attended my medical studies I found by no means diminished in approaching this new science. The subject was both less engaging, and less intelligible. I set to, nevertheless, with vigour; supplied myself with a due complement of folios and quartos; attended the courts; and began to inquire a little into the *minutiae* of practice. The further I examined, the less I was encouraged to proceed. When I thought of the difficulties and discomforts which beset the road to eminence;—the jostling of competitors, the neglect of merit, the brow-beating of judges, the sarcasms of rival barristers, the familiarity of attorneys, the retorts of witnesses, the disgrace of a public failure;—all these phantoms rose in such terror before me, that I fairly gave up the pursuit, without risking an attempt.

“ I then made a feeble effort at studying for the English Church, in whose tenets I had been bred. But as I was possessed of no natural interest, I began to consider how I was qualified for asking favours, dancing attendance, catching opportunities, and using

other means of pushing my pretensions with those who had the prizes in their gift. The result of this investigation was so decisive, that I straightway gave over my studies in divinity.

“I afterwards rented a farm;—but had not lived there twelve months, when half my cows died, and half my sheep were stolen; besides losing my crop, laming my horses, and quarrelling with my servants, neighbours, and landlord. In short, sir, I found that, wherever I was brought into contact with other men,—and obliged to act along with them in any of the purposes of life,—the vice of my early habits formed an obstacle which was not to be overcome.

“Thus, sir, have more than half of my days been spent; and I now remain without employment, fortune, or expectations; dissatisfied with myself, and with all mankind. That there may have been flaws in my natural temper I am ready to allow; but these were doubtless nourished and inflamed by that early indulgence which weakens the whole mind, and induces a morbid sensitiveness;—just as over delicate treatment enfeebles the body. In such a state, we suffer acute pain from the common rubs and pressure of society; which, on a mind of healthy tone, only act as a stimulant to vigour and caution.

“I can scarcely flatter myself, that my case is within the reach of your moral prescriptions; but if it shall enable you to furnish a preventive which may save others from a similar fate, this will afford a sensible consolation to your humble servant,

“ALCANDER.”

LVI. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION.

Utiliusne sit domi, atque intra privatos parietes, studentem continere ; an frequentiæ scholarum, et velut publicis præceptoribus, tradere.

QUINTIL.

“ BROTHER,”—said my sister Judith, the other morning, as we were sitting together after breakfast, just as our little nephew had set off to a fishing party, “ I see that you have lately published a letter from “ one calling himself Alcander, in which that wise- “ acre attempts, forsooth, to show the evils of a private “ education, under a fond mother. It seems to me to “ contain a deal of nonsense : and I hope that such “ fancies will not persuade you to risk our poor child “ at a public school.”—“ I was persuaded to that “ course, my good sister, long before I saw the let- “ ter you allude to.”—“ But, dear brother, think of “ his early age.”—“ What do you call an early age, “ sister ? The boy was eight at his last birthday. I “ was sent to a public school myself a year younger, “ and suffered no damage, I assure you.”—“ But “ really, brother, things were different in those days. “ The streets of Edinburgh are become so crowded “ now, and people are so rude and boisterous, and there “ is such a throng of carts and coaches. It was only in “ yesterday’s paper that I saw a shocking accident of “ a boy tumbling into a coal-cellar :—and Mrs Dandle “ told me, just before we left town, that she had such a “ fright about one of her children, who was near run “ over by the Leith stage :—and then the elder boys

“are so cruel and tyrannical.—I hope you will at least send John with him, every day, to and from school.”—“Indeed, sister, I will do no such thing. The boy must just take his chance, as other boys have done before him. For the first few days, our neighbour Mr Friendly’s son, who has been some time at school, will take care of him ; and he must afterwards learn to take care of himself.”—“O brother ! but if any accident were to happen.”—“My dear sister, if there should, you know what sincere affliction it would give me : but, in this world, we must trust something to Providence. It is better to run a little risk, than, by over care, to make the boy infallibly good for nothing.”—“Then I hope you will only send him to one of the private teachers, near us, in the New Town.”—“No, sister :—that would defeat part of my object in sending him to a public school at all. He shall go to the High School, where I was myself. It is an excellent seminary. And the jostling and buffeting he meets with there will only be for his good. No, no, sister :—with all proper tenderness for the boy, he shall not be bred a milksop.”

This is but the abstract or epitome of a great many dialogues which have passed between my worthy sister and myself, on a subject equally interesting to us both. The occasion has led me to look into the old controversy respecting the benefits of a public or private education. On a matter so hackneyed, it cannot be expected that I should throw much new light ; but I will state what appears to me to be the result of the arguments on both sides.

It was a saying of Dr Johnson that all discussions on this subject are fruitless ; for that Education had been as well known a thousand years ago, as it ever would be. Without admitting the truth of this dogma, in its full extent, it is, I think, so far just, as it implies a censure on all systems of education which are peculiar, and unfitted for common use. In this, as in most other matters of general concern, it seldom does well to affect singularity, or depart from the current of our age. The great object of education is to fit a man for making an honourable and worthy figure among his contemporaries ; and, to this end, he must not only get his knowledge in the same way ; but, to a certain extent, imbibe the same ideas, habits, and prepossessions which they have. It is one of the objections to a foreign education,—too early begun and long continued,—that it leads to habits of an opposite kind. One who is to pass his life in any particular society must perforce adopt some of its prejudices. There would be no comfortable living in England for any man who doubted the infallibility of Shakspeare, Roast Beef, or Trial by Jury.

It is this unfitness for general use which forms one main objection to private education. There is not one parent among a thousand, who is either qualified for the task himself, or has the means of procuring others that are. Among the majority even of the upper classes, such a thing could not be attempted ; and in the greater number of cases where it was attempted, the work of education would probably be worse managed than in the usual way.

The same objection of inapplicability indeed affects most of the theoretical systems of education, or deviations from the common practice, which have been proposed. It has been justly remarked of Rousseau's doctrines on this subject, that his moving principle was change,—a departure from all things used and settled :—so that, when the world happened to be right, he was wrong ;—when the world happened to be wrong, he was right. But the prevailing objection to his system is its impracticability. He, in truth, requires the whole world to enter into a combination to educate his *Emile*. Nothing must be instilled into his young mind by direct precept ; for this supersedes, by authority, the operation of the natural powers. He must therefore form conclusions from his own observation ; and to supply him with matter for these,—and cheat him indirectly into wisdom,—a succession of scenes and pantomimes must be exhibited before his eyes, by performers who are in the secret. Now, to one who has been versant in the real business of education,—or is acquainted with the common usages of life,—this is mere trifling. Independently of the general objection to all plans of trick or deception,—and the chance of failure and ridicule which attends them,—there is not one case in ten thousand where either time or means exist for putting them in practice.

Indeed, in this celebrated plan of education, I think that there appear many symptoms of the same quackery, and bad faith, which distinguished the whole writings and character of its author. M. Grimm tells us an amusing anecdote of a gentleman who waited on Rous-

seau, and informed him that he had educated his son according to the principles laid down in the *Emile*. "Tant pis ! Monsieur," replied the philosopher, "pour vous, et votre fils :—tant pis !"

The *System of Practical Education* by Miss Edgeworth, well deserves the name bestowed on it ; as it possesses a tone of rationality and attainableness which few others can boast, and which could only have proceeded from actual experience in the work of education. Yet, in some particulars,—such as the exclusion of all intercourse with servants,—she errs in the very particular I have mentioned. Besides other objections, the thing is wholly impracticable in the great majority of cases. Indeed, in some of the later works of this intelligent author, she seems disposed to qualify the above and other suggestions in education, which vary from common use ; and to doubt how far their benefit compensates for their singularity, and difficulty of attainment.

It has further been objected to her system, that, though free from deceit, there is too much thinking and contrivance about it ; and that the work of instruction is too prominently and incessantly brought forward to the child itself ;—nothing being left to the course of nature and events. This is partly true ; and it is an error attaching to all private education ; and more especially to all systems. But, on the other hand, I think the usefulness of her doctrines is underrated, when the benefit of all preceptive rules is denied, on the ground that experience, and the collisions of the world, will remedy the errors of original breeding.

This may be true in the majority of cases ; but surely there are instances of the ruin of individuals being clearly traceable to a bad or neglected education, Now, if the lessons and examples of Miss Edgeworth, by instructing parents, or profitably exercising the children themselves, tend to prevent this, they may certainly be of use.

But let us return to our proper subject, and look a little more closely into the arguments which have been advanced in behalf of a private education ; and see how far they establish its advantage, even where it is practicable. The authorities in its favour, in our language, most entitled to respect, are certainly those of Adam Smith, and Cowper the poet. Such advisers well merit attention ; for no country ever produced two wiser or better men. But excellent as was their judgment, there were circumstances in the character and situation of each, which perhaps somewhat biased their opinions on this subject. They were both retired and speculative men, little versed in the world or its affairs. They possessed the delicate complexion of genius,—recoiled from crowds,—and found their proper element in contemplation and repose. For such men (few indeed in number) it may perhaps be true that a private education is the best. There, the reflective powers may perhaps, by a more tender and elaborate culture, be expanded to a higher growth ; while, in the bustle of a public school, the genius of such men may be neglected, and their spirits overwhelmed. This seems to have been the case with Cowper. The sensitiveness of his nature was so great,

that it had not strength to rise and harden against the collision of ruder spirits, but sunk in helpless despondency. That exercise which would only have fortified a more robust temperament, reduced his to utter depression. But his case was peculiar. There was a weakness in his nerves, evidently morbid, from the first; which afterwards displayed itself in the most melancholy results. The remembrance of his own sufferings at a public school prejudiced his mind against that system of education. Neither his opinions, nor his example, therefore, can have a just application to other cases: and the weight of his testimony is diminished as an authority on the whole question.

Smith, though of the same contemplative turn, possessed a frame of mind far more healthy and vigorous than that of Cowper. There is, indeed, throughout his whole doctrines in morals and politics, a tone of generosity and manliness, which savours more of the hardy genius of antiquity, than of the accommodating spirit of modern times. The ground, accordingly, on which he places his preference of a private education is less a regard for the pupil himself, than for those with whom he is connected. The *indurative* effects of a public education (if I may use the expression), as far as concerns the individual, are quite in unison with his general vigour of thinking and advising: but he dreads the influence of early estrangement from the paternal roof on those domestic ties which are so essential towards both happiness and virtue. This subject I will pursue in my next paper.

LVII. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION.

Plurimum enim interest, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus instituas.

JUV.

“ The education of boys at distant great schools,” says Dr Smith, in the most profound and beautiful of all philosophical treatises,* “ of young men at distant colleges, of young ladies in distant nunneries and boarding-schools, seems, in the higher ranks of life, to have hurt most essentially the domestic morals, and consequently the domestic happiness, both of France and England. Do you wish to educate your children to be dutiful to their parents, to be kind and affectionate to their brothers and sisters? —Put them under the necessity of being dutiful children, of being kind and affectionate brothers and sisters:—Educate them in your own house. From their parents’ house, they may, with propriety and advantage, go out every day to attend public schools: but let their dwelling be always at home. Respect for you must always impose a very useful restraint on their conduct: and respect for them may frequently impose no useless restraint upon your own. Surely no acquirement which can possibly be derived from what is called a public education can make any sort of compensation for what is

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, part 6, sect. 2, chap. i.

“almost certainly and necessarily lost by it. Domestic education is the institution of nature: public education the contrivance of man. It is surely unnecessary to say which is likely to be the wisest.”

The general drift of Cowper's *Tyrocinium*, is similar to the above. He conceives that the early and continued separation of children from the parental roof prevents the strengthening of those domestic ties which form the prime blessing, and cordial charity, of human life: or as he elsewhere beautifully expresses it,—

————— That only bliss
Of Paradise which hath surviv'd the fall.

He further enlarges on the neglect of moral and religious instruction, and the danger of bad example, to be apprehended at public schools. Now, it is not to be disguised that those fears have all a certain degree of foundation; and seem to dissuade from the too early or total estrangement of a child from the society of its nearest kindred. But the best of all tests of theory is to consult experience; and to inquire what has happened in those cases where a public education has been tried. We have all known instances, among our own acquaintance, of boys being even sent, very young, to distant schools (returning home occasionally on vacations and holidays), without any apparent injury to their morals, or the least abatement of their natural affections. Indeed, I am not sure whether a temporary separation does not rather invigorate these affections, and prevent the indifference resulting from long use,—besides certain little jarrings and jealousies

which arise among the best tempers when constantly together.

This course, however, I only recommend with discretion ; and in particular (as I have said), under the condition that the estrangement should not take place too soon, or too completely. When a boy is more advanced in years, he is both less liable to evil,—and more susceptible of advantage,—from a distant public school ; and then habits of domestic affection have been formed at home. For the earlier years, the system proposed by Smith, has, I own, my preference ;—that of sending the child to a neighbouring public school, but continuing his home under the parental roof. It is a plan which combines the good effects of both a public and private education, without incurring the risks of either ; and is one which the inhabitants of such a city as Edinburgh have the best opportunity of adopting. In this way, are combined the advantages of due care of a boy's health and morals ;—the studying of his genius, and formation of his character, by those most interested in his welfare ;—with the growth, on his part, of reciprocal habits of duty and affection towards them :—while, on the other, in the great seminaries of our metropolis, he will attain that emulation, manliness, independence, necessity of acting for himself, power of keeping his own, knowledge of mankind, and formation of useful friendships, which are considered as the chief benefits of a public education. After a seasoning of this sort too, a boy will go with more advantage, and less risk, to a distant school.

The great evil of an education wholly private (particularly when among over-indulgent parents or relations), is, that it tends to unfit a boy for ever becoming a man ;—for ever being able to conduct himself in the mixed society and contentions of the world. He is apt to acquire an over delicacy, timidity, and fastidiousness of mind,—qualities equally unfavourable to his private happiness, and to his advancement in the world. He comes forth into life the most helpless and disconsolate of beings ;—ignorant of what is familiar to others ;—irresolute from inexperience ;—disturbed by the most common occurrences ;—and liable to fall under improper influence from the mere sense of inferiority. On the other hand, with these qualities are frequently joined a confidence in his own opinions, formed in solitude, and an impatience at hearing them questioned. He never attains that generosity and decision of character,—that tolerance of others,—that impartial estimate of himself,—in short, that knowledge of the world,—which are necessary towards success in active life ; and is often driven to bury in retirement powers which, by a more healthful course of training, might have expanded into a bloom of vigorous exertion, honourable to himself, and useful to mankind.

After all, however, let us not refine too much ; or expect absolute certainty in our conclusions. The above observations, though generally true, and worthy of some regard, are yet liable to a thousand exceptions ; and we often see a good result from combinations the most unlikely, or from leaving things

to their natural course. It is with Education as with other practical sciences. When we study Anatomy, we behold a frame constructed with such complexity and delicacy, and liable to so many derangements ;—such a multitude of organs, nerves, and fibres, co-operating, counteracting, or balancing each other ;—that we wonder how a man can ever step over the threshold without suffering injury. When we peruse a treatise on Agriculture, we find so many conditions required to forward the growth of vegetables ;—such adaptations of heat, and moisture, and wind, and frost, and soil, and manure ;—so many risks of blight or failure ;—that we almost doubt whether any crop can, without a special interposition, be ever gathered into the barn-yard. Yet, in both cases, Nature does her work with ease and regularity. And so, amidst the manifold risks of Education, public and private, which are magnified by ingenious theorists, we still see good results on the whole ; and boys come forth, from opposite systems, equally upright and enlightened men. This leads us back to the aphorism from which we set out ;—not to refine or deliberate too anxiously on the matter ;—but, generally speaking, rather to lean towards the common course,—which cannot be very bad when it produces such results.

I will not at present attempt to carry my pupil onward through the more mature parts of education, which finish and prepare him for the business of life ; or enlarge on the present subject further than to notice the just observation of Dr Moore,—that a turn for letters is even more essential for those whose for-

tune exempts them from professional labour, than for those on whom employment is enforced by necessity. I may remark, however, that for all men, busy or idle, a taste for study is unquestionably the greatest, the most lasting, and the most attainable of the blessings of life.

There is one system of Education, calculated for maturer years, which has attracted much notice, and much obloquy,—I mean that of Lord Chesterfield. It has, like other systems, been considered too much in the gross ; and blamed too indiscriminately. A judicious student will find in it many advices which may improve both his manners and his conduct ;—many views of human nature at once profound and just :—And he may easily reap the benefit of what is good, without drawing infection from the unworthy principles elsewhere inculcated. These last indeed are obtruded with so little disguise, and such open and apparent baseness, that with every well-ordered mind, their effect will rather be to excite indignation and disgust, and to confirm in honourable purposes. The truth is, that,—setting aside all ideas of morality,—I have often wondered how a man of the penetration of Lord Chesterfield could so far mistake the opinions and manners of his own countrymen, as to recommend such courses, as the means of advancement to a native of Britain. His whole system is calculated for the meridian of a despotic monarchy. Those lighter accomplishments, and graceful manners, on which he sets so high a value, may lead to advancement, when this depends solely on the caprice of a luxurious prince, or his

female favourites ; but in a popular government like ours, it requires far other solid and manly virtues to reach eminent stations. No man can fill these without being fitted for them by knowledge, ability, and hardihood. Nay, a courtier-like polish of manner will perhaps rather prejudice than recommend in the public opinion. As to that system of laborious art and duplicity which his Lordship inculcates ;—of studying and attracting mankind only to betray them ;—that sacrifice of all principle to promote your own advancement ;—I am satisfied that it is as ineffectual as it is detestable. In a country like this, where so much depends on public opinion,—and where that opinion is remarkable for generous honesty,—the very suspicion of such duplicity would injure far more, even with a view to private interest, than any petty advantage which it might gain. Nay, it is somewhat singular, that Lord Chesterfield's own political life exhibited an example of remarkable consistency and independence. He generally espoused the popular side of every question ;—was but a short while in office ;—and scorned to sacrifice any opinion or principle to the attainment of those objects, whose pursuit he recommends at the price of incessant labour, duplicity, and vice. In many of the elegant moral essays with which he enriched the periodical papers of his time, he exposes and ridicules the dishonest courses which he advises in the Letters to his Son.

I must observe, before concluding, that the doctrines advanced in this and my last paper relate almost exclusively to my own sex. With regard to the more

amiable half of our species, my opinions on the subject of private and public education are nearly the reverse of those already given. As woman's proper sphere is domestic privacy ;—as her chief endowments are there called forth ;—as there her virtues and her graces equally flourish, as in their proper soil ;—I recommend for her a domestic education. As a woman is not called upon to struggle through the world, like the other sex, she needs not the hardening of a public seminary :—And that purity and delicacy of mind which is the ornament of her sex, runs a risk of being there blunted by use, if not soiled by contamination. It will not be suspected that, in saying this, I am an admirer of those airs of over timidity affected by some ladies : for nothing is more compatible, in the female character,—or indeed more generally united,—than strength of mind, and real delicacy of feeling. As to Manners,—nowhere are these so likely to be formed to advantage, as under an intelligent mother, and the society of virtuous and accomplished friends. The demeanour, at once elegant, simple, and cordial,—insensibly caught, as it were, in this domestic circle,—is far more attractive than that ambitious display which is too often mistaken for improvement by the superintendents of large seminaries. As to those matters of instruction and accomplishment which parents are unable to impart themselves,—these may be acquired, either by the attendance of masters, or from a domestic governess ; but the morals and manners are both most likely to improve from the superintendence and society of home.

Here, however, as before, I would not lay down the rule too absolutely. There may be circumstances which prevent the usual benefits of domestic education, even in the case of females : And there are doubtless many instances of young women, who have been bred at public boarding-schools, returning uninjured, and proving excellent wives and mothers. But if, some thirty years ago, I had been about to enter into the happy state of wedlock ;—and had asked my fair, amidst our endearments, where she acquired those graces and accomplishments which had won my heart ;—I own that it would have sounded pleasanter in my ears to have heard her answer, *That she was educated at home.*

LVIII. VISIT TO ADMIRAL TRUMAN.

Ut ventum ad coenam est, dicenda tacenda locutus.

HOR.

SOON after our arrival in the country, we received an invitation to spend a day or two with our neighbour Admiral Truman. With a view of meeting this occasion, my worthy sister set about unfolding those stores of ornament which she had brought with her, and which had attracted my censure on the day of packing, as commemorated in a former paper. Several forenoons were devoted to strict seclusion in her own chamber, where nobody was admitted but her handmaid Mrs Kitty, who officiated as privy-council-

lor. Once or twice, when the door happened to be left ajar, I caught a passing glimpse of the interior; and beheld the two females in deep consultation. Around were scattered open trunks,—bandboxes emptied of their contents,—and folds of silk and muslin occupying every chair; while shreds of lace, ends of ribbon, feathers, flounces, and other *paraphernalia*, were lavished about the room, *in most admired disorder*.

At length she completed her preparations, and on the day appointed forth we fared. My good sister's whole soul was divided between attention to her own appearance, and anxiety for the welfare of her nephew during her absence. Manifold were the injunctions left on him, and on the whole household, to beware of all evils incident to the children of men:—To avoid horses, and cows, and dogs, and cats, and ponds, and precipices, and carts, and coaches,—and all manner of things, moving or stationary,—animate or inanimate,—from which peril might arise. After reiterating every lesson of precaution, and bestowing on him many tender caresses, she tore herself away, and we proceeded on our journey. These various entanglements detained us so long, that on our arrival at the Admiral's, we found, by sundry well known symptoms, that we were too late. The lackeys were standing at the front door, powdered and liveried, on the look-out for us; and as we entered the drawing-room, the sound of "Get dinner" audibly saluted our ears. The Admiral welcomed us with a robust shake of the hand, and a "How fare you, my hearts—glad to see you back in the country:"—then

addressing me,—with an arch wink to the rest of the company ;—“ Eh, brother ?—Has the town been the better for your sermonizing, think you ?—Don’t hear of much amendment yet, eh ?”—The lady of the house now coming up, exclaimed, “ La ! Miss Judith, what a charming sweet cap that is :—I must have a pattern :—it is from London, I’m sure.—But what kept you so late, of all love ?—I was so frustrated about you, you’ve no idear. I vow I thought you were overturned, or had given us the go-by.”——“ All’s one for that,” said the Admiral,—“ but mind you, mistress, that the dinner don’t give us the go-by.”—We found among the guests, Sir William and Lady Constant, Mr and Mrs Hazy, Mr and Mrs Megrim, Colonel Gorget, and others of our friends. The Admiral’s hint was attended to, and we soon had a summons to dinner.

The conversation turned, as not unusual at such ceremonies, on the merits of the dishes. The fish was pronounced excellent. “ La ! my dear sir,” said the lady of the mansion,—“ tolerable enough for Scotland : but, for my part, I never saw good fish out of London, not I. Dear me, Sir William, how I envy you being so much there. I wonder every body in Scotland don’t get into Parliament, for the pleasure of living in London.”——“ Why, madam,” returned Sir William, “ that might be rather inconvenient :—But I wish I could exchange with you. I am more in London than I desire to be.”——“ Well, now,” resumed the lady, “ that is so odd :—No gentility—no knowledge of life, out of London.”——“ Aye, aye, my dear,

—very true—very true,” said the Admiral aloud :—then in a lower tone to his next neighbour,—“ Smoke the gentility of Redriffe.”

“ May I ask, madam,” said Mr Megrim, “ if there be any catchup in this sauce ? ”—“ Of course,—to be sure, sir,” rejoined the lady ; “ who ever heard of fish sauce without catchup ? ”—“ Then, madam, I hope it was made from your own mushrooms, and that they were carefully gathered.”—“ No indeed, sir :—it’s all from London. I get all them things from London, I assure you ;—Scotch mushrooms indeed ! ”—Here I observed that Mr Megrim’s countenance fell. He cast a look at his wife,—and muttering something about *deleterious fungi*, sent away his plate. His observant partner soon followed his example.

It was not unamusing to remark, indeed, how this worthy couple sat like spies on each other, during the whole entertainment. As I was helping Mrs Megrim, who sat next me, to a slice of ham, her husband cast a look on her full of disapprobation ;—“ O my dear,” said he, “ the most unwholesome, indigestible ”—the poor lady shrunk back in time, and avoided the danger. I observed, however, that she soon after paid him in kind ; for, just as he was raising to his mouth a slice of delicious marrow-pudding, she interposed, and intreated him to send it away. This he did with some reluctance,—observing, that the small morsel he took was of little consequence ;—but he could not in decency refuse, after her compliance in the affair of the ham. Thus did these good helpmates go on, per-

forming mutually the function of Sancho's doctor ; and snatching the untasted morsel from each other's lips, during the whole dinner.

" Pray, Mr Keeper," said Mr Hazy, " have you turned your attention to the wonderful phenomena which occur, as to the retiring of the ocean from the shores of this island. I lately met with a striking instance of it, in a letter from my learned friend Dr Dunder, whose house is at present at least fifteen miles from the sea ;—yet he tells me, that it appears from ancient writings and muniments, belonging to a monastic foundation near the spot, that various sorts of shell-fish were formerly gathered under the walls of the house :—Very singular, is it not ?"—" Very singular, indeed, sir :—Pray, what sort of shell-fish ?"—" My correspondent particularizes *Crabs*."—" Do you not think, sir, that they may have been Crab-apples ?"—Here the Admiral burst into an outrageous laugh :—" Aye, aye,—take my life on't, they were Crab-apples—Sour trash I warrant 'em."—" Excuse me, Admiral," rejoined Mr Hazy, " I am not often mistaken in such matters. I did not actually see the ancient manuscript myself ; but, from my friend's information, you may rely upon it, that the fact is as I tell you. Nay, there are phenomena scarcely less wonderful, as to the degeneracy of our climate now-a-days, which have fallen under my own observation. There is a Nonpareil apple-tree behind my house, which used to ripen its fruit regularly every year : but, for a considerable time back, it is absolutely good for nothing." To this no reply was made ; but Mrs

Hazy whispered me that, besides the degeneracy of the climate, the gardener attributed the failure to Mr Hazy having ordered the tree to be washed with aquafortis, which was recommended in a magazine, as a sure way of improving the fruit.

The truth is, that our friend Mr Hazy is one of those inert bodies which are never at rest. His brain is always agog after one project or another ; and resembles the incessant working of a Mud Volcano,—dulness in commotion.

Somewhat elated with his triumph on the subject of the Nonpareil, he went on to say,—“ There are indeed many other proofs of the change of our climate for the worse. I may note one,—the loss of the Nightingale,—which used to be common in our woods.”—“ Really ?” said I, “ I was not aware of that.”—“ O yes,” returned he, “ I met with a remarkable proof of it, in perusing an ancient monkish traveller in this country, whose words I noted down in my pocket-book. *Avis ibi frequens, qui, totâ nocte, silvas atque nemora, flebili cantu, et tristibus querimoniis implet.* Now, are not these expressions completely descriptive ? They are almost the very terms applied by Virgil to the Nightingale.”—“ Quite so indeed,” replied I ;—“ though cavillers might allege that they apply equally to the Owl.”—Here the Admiral again broke into a most boisterous cachinnation :—“ The Owl,—why not ?—A very good bird the Owl :—Keeps the mice from my barn-yard, which is more than fifty Nightingales will do.” Then turning to Colonel Gorget—“ Colonel,” said he, “ suppose we

have a glass of *Hermitage* together. You won't like it the worse, that I took it from those scoundrels the French, in the Bay of Biscay. It is prime stuff I can tell you."—"Why, Admiral, I am no great admirer of the modern French, certainly. But there was anciently a pretty turn of politeness among their military men. I remember, once in America"—"Politeness!" re-echoed the Admiral,—“all grimace and hypocrisy:—a set of lying, cringing, frog-eating, wooden-shoed rascals:—Beating is too good for 'em. I only think Nature made a mistake in giving them such rare wine. Howsomever, it comes all to one, if we take it from them.”—“That was the convoy you captured, when cruising with Captain Gangway.”—"Aye, there was a pretty lubber for you. If I had given him his due, I would have brought him to a court-martial, and blown him to old Davy. He kept cruising and skulking a whole a'ternoon, while I cut out a corvette from under the very guns of Rochelle. Yet he has been promoted, and employed ever since; while I am laid up here, high and dry, like an old hulk:—But it's always the way:—My service to you, Colonel.”

As the ladies were retiring, a gentleman, in the hurry of his politeness to open the door, trod on our Hostess's train, and occasioned a fearful rent. “La, sir!” exclaimed she, “if you haven't tore my *gownd*:—Well, I vow that is so provoking:—But it don't signify:—Pray, never mind:—Sally will take it up in a jiffy.”—As we resumed our seats, after the door was shut, the Admiral said to the unfortunate author of the mischief,—“She's bloody angry with you now,

for all that:—But she'll cool, like scaldings, as we used to say on the forecastle."

After joining the ladies in the drawing-room, we sat down to cards. The Admiral and his lady, according to a custom not very laudable, are always partners: but I presume that it is founded on a sense of the conjugal right and duty of mutually venting and bearing each other's ill humour. Of these connubial attributes, (that is the active, not the passive part), both loving spouses availed themselves pretty freely, on the present occasion: and as fortune or skill happened to give the advantage to Sir William and me, who were their opponents, the criminations and recriminations grew at times very lively.—"Why did you not return me the club, madam?" exclaimed the Admiral.—"Because, sir, I had none in my hand"—answered the lady, with a triumphant coolness.—"Humph," growled the Admiral;—"if you had had one, I believe it would have been all the same thing."

Time and the hour, however, rolled on,—smoothing down these, as they do more important contentions,—and at length resigned us all very amicably to rest.

LIX. CONVERSATION ON THE GAME LAWS.

Jam vero illud stultissimum,—existimare omnia justa esse, quæ scita sint in populorum institutis aut legibus.

Cic.

As we sat lounging next morning, after breakfast,—the ladies having retired to the drawing-room,—a servant entered, and told the Admiral that the

Gamekeeper was below :—That he had been out watching in the night,—had been attacked by poachers,—and was a good deal hurt. On this, the Admiral burst into a volley of oaths :—“ Really, Sir William, it is a shame,—a downright burning shame to the Legislature,—that such fellows should be allowed to go about, in defiance of all law and order ;—seizing our property,—assaulting our people,—and all with impunity. It should be declared capital :—Death, without benefit of clergy, Sir William :—Transportation is too good for such rascals :—And as for those town gluttons who encourage the rogues, by buying their game,—a trip over the salt sea might not be amiss for them too :—many go for less matter, I’m sure.”* Then turning to the servant ;—“ Is he able to come up stairs ? ”—“ O yes, sir :—he has only got cuffed a bit about the head, and a black eye :—he was a little down at first :—but he has got his breakfast, and a dram, and is now pretty hearty.”—“ Well, send him up.”

The Gamekeeper, who is a stout Yorkshireman, accordingly made his appearance; and seemed, to be sure, but in sorry plight. His head was bound up with a handkerchief, one fold of which came over his right eye ;—while, on that part of his face still visi-

* The worthy Admiral was probably not aware how much his notions harmonized with those of our ancient lawgivers, on this subject. The Act of the Scottish Parliament of King James VI., 1600, c. 23, bitterly reprobates the selling of wild fowl “to sic personnes wha prefers their awne inordinar appetite and “gluttonie to the obedience of the saids laws,” &c.

ble, sundry scars and blemishes spoke too plainly the effects of the nocturnal skirmish.—“ Well, my poor fellow,” said the Admiral, “ you have had but a rough night of it, with those rascals :—Sadly peppered, I see, about the upper works ; and a day-light closed :—But how was it, man ?—Tell us all about it.”—“ Why, your honour, there was I, and little Bill Slack of the Mains,—the same lad as sometimes helps in the kennel, your honour ;—We two went out to watch last night, seeing it was moonlight, and I thought the fellows would be out :—So we went up by the corner of the planting, at the foot of the Corby Hill,—for I had suspect of one or two chaps as comes that way sometimes :—So I says to Bill, says I,—Them fellows as I told you of, says I, will be coming round by this here corner to-night, to look for a pheasant, as sure as my name’s George, says I :—It’s like enough, says Bill, says he :—So we had hardly said them words, your honour, when smack,—off goes a gun :—There they are, Bill, says I ;—So, says I, Bill, look sharp, and mind your eye,—and go you round by that there patch of copse, says I,—up the burn like,—and I will keep along this here path, through the furze ;—and, if you see any thing, give me a whistle, says I :—So Bill went up the burn, as I was a-telling your honour, and I kept along by the other side :—And just as I turned the corner, your honour, at the north end of the planting, I seed two chaps slinking away with a gun, and something like a pheasant in their hand,—for at this time the moon was got under a cloud :—So I hollows out to them,—Hollo! you fellows,

says I, what are you doing there? So, with that, they said nothing, but set a-running like mad :—So then I ran too,—and sung out for Bill to come round and face them :—And so, your honour, when they sees Bill a-coming, one of them bolts over the dike into the planting ;—and the other was going to follow,—but the stones slipped with him, and I got up, and caught him by the leg ;—but he kicked like brimstone, your honour, and then gave a swing round, and we both had near fallen ; but he recovered himself, and so did I,—and then he caught me by the throat, and swore a terrible oath,—says he, *I'll blow your bloody brains out*, says he :—So then he shouted for the other fellow to come back :—So he came back, and both fell on me at once :—But I twisted his gun from him, and threw it over the dike ; and fired off my own in the air, for fear of worse mischief, your honour :—So by this time Bill comes up :—And one of them lets drive at me, behind the ear, with a stone in his fist, and made me stagger a bit :—But I took my gun short, and rattled him such a lick over the crown, as he won't forget in two days :—Then Bill, he was yoked with the other fellow,—and little *Vixen*, who was out with me, yerked at their heels like a very devil :—She's more *gamer*, your honour, after a poacher than any thing—she knows them by the smell :—So we closed all four together, and kept banging away pretty tight,—for they were stout fellows, your honour :—And so I was always a-calling on them to tell their names :—No, says they, we won't tell our names, says they, neither for you, nor

them that sent you, says they :—That was meaning your honour :—So we still kept at it ;—but the fellow's coat-tail, as I had a hold of, tore away, and he got loose, and scrambled over the dike ;—and then, as I was a-following him, I slipped and fell :—And so, while I was down, the other fellow got away from Bill :—But we gave them as good as they brought, your honour ;—and the sun wont shine on their faces for a day or two, that I'll be bound :—And I have got their gun, which is only an old rusty firelock ;—and a hat, and a bit of the coat, as I told your honour ;—and the pheasant they had killed ;—and I warrant I find them out before they're a week older, that I will."—"Rascals ! poaching scoundrels !"—exclaimed the Admiral,—“ they shall cross the line for it, if there's law in the land.”—" Indeed, your honour, it's of no use keeping no more keepers, if the game is to be abused by them vermin :—They're worse than weasels by half :—I'm sure I've seen fellows hung at our 'Sizes at York for less matter.”—" Very true, very true, George,”—said the Admiral ;—“ but go home, and keep yourself quiet for a day or two ;—and I'll send you something to do your head good. But what's become of Bill ?”—" Pretty poorly, your honour :—He got a crack on the side of the head, that has loosened three of his teeth ; and he says as how his ear rings like a psalm tune.”—" Tune !—rascals !—I'll make them sing to some tune,—and dance too,—I will. They should dance on the tight rope, at Jack Ketch's ball, if they had their due. But they will die in their shoes yet. You will have amends of

them, I warrant you.”—“ I don’t mind for that, your honour. We gave it them pretty fair already. But it’s a shame such rogues and larceners should go about in a Christian land.”

On the Gamekeeper’s departure, the Admiral, again turning to Sir William, said,—“ Really the fellow is right :—It is a shame to our laws that such things should be :—What are you Parliament-men thinking of, that you do not take measures to extirpate such vagabonds ?”—“ Why, Admiral, if the vagabonds, are not extirpated, it is not for want of laws and penalties, I’m sure :—Scarce a session passes without new ones, but all prove equally ineffectual.”—“ It is because they are too mild,” retorted the Admiral,—“ too mild by half :—I would transport, or even hang the fellows, on repetition :—And as for those who buy, they should suffer as accessories ;—accessories, Sir William ;—I am sure they are no better.”—“ What says our friend the Keeper of the Cabinet to this ?”—replied Sir William,—maliciously diverting the current on me ;—“ He is a philosopher, and impartial :—I suspect that the Legislature has not offended him by over lenity.”—“ Why, Sir William,” replied I,—“ I will,—when thus appealed to,—give my opinion freely. I do not quarrel with the Legislature for their wish to discourage poaching :—I have no more favour for the practice than they have :—I despise the sentimental cant of compassion for poachers :—They are, in general, bad members of society :—I admit the right and expediency of the owners of land reserving to themselves the game upon it :—

But, after all these concessions, I must own that I think the Legislature has not taken the best way of attaining the end in view.

“ We have just witnessed a specimen of the constant nocturnal violence which prevails, on the subject of Game. In our neighbouring country of England, it seems to have grown to a still higher pitch of systematic atrocity :—Insomuch that scarcely a year passes without the loss of lives. The evil has much increased of late years ;—and why ?—Do you suppose that it is from an increasing love of sport in the lower orders ? Alas ! it is from a far stronger and steadier passion,—the love of gain. Our towns have increased in size, and wealth, and luxury :—This increases the demand for game ;—and the innumerable ready and rapid conveyances which ply nowadays, afford the means of transport from every quarter. By the movements of a mail-coach, the produce of the distant Scottish moors arrives, in perfect season, to grace the epicurean tables of London. The greater provincial towns each form their centre of attraction. Thus high prices are given :—and were they twice as high, the competition of vanity, wealth, and luxury, would still give them. This combination of profit and facility makes the temptation irresistible. Were you even to make the offence capital,—as my friend the Admiral advises,—I believe it would not be repressed.

“ How then are you to put an end to poaching ?—Simply by supplying the city markets lawfully with game. No one thinks of robbing your sheepfold, or

your henroost, to supply the market with mutton and poultry ;—for this plain reason, that you do so yourself. No one will poach on your moors or manors, if you forestall them by dealing with the city poulterers yourself. A foolish law forbids this, even to them whom it recognises as the lawful owners of game :—A prejudice, still more foolish, proscribes it as dishonourable :—And the Legislature goes on, accumulating fresh penalties against both sellers and buyers, when it should do just the reverse,—by both allowing and encouraging a free sale.

“ In what form the law should be technically settled, I am not lawyer enough to advise. To the plan of declaring game the property of the owner of the land on which it is found, there is, I understand, an objection, grounded on the nature of that right. We have no idea of a right of property which does not attach to the individual claimed, wherever situated. If a horse or sheep stray, the owner follows, and reclaims it, at any distance. This cannot apply to animals which are neither localized, nor identified ;—of which the individuals cannot be ascertained or reclaimed ;—but which change their master, at every flight they take to new ground. Still, there might, I think, be conferred, by statute, such a modified right of property in them, as to make them mine, so long as they are clearly within my domain ;—to the effect of entitling me to appropriate them myself ;—and to make it punishable in others to appropriate them, without my leave. Certain penalties might be affixed to the violation of this right, and enforced by the ordinary

process of the criminal law. The very connecting of the notion of property with game,—and the assimilation of its correlative infringement to Theft,—would tend to discredit and discourage all illegal interference. Many a one poaches without remorse, who would scruple to steal.

“ As to the difficulty arising from the manorial rights in England (with which we are happily unacquainted in this country) these might be made the subject of valuation and purchase, according to some prescribed rule.

“ But there is another difficulty still harder, I fear, to get over than either of the above,—the prejudices of the proprietors of land ;—prejudices which have no better foundation than an empty pride, and an exclusive, appropriating spirit. Game, say they, was destined, by the eternal laws of nature, for our peculiar use and pastime ; and none shall presume to share in it, but by our free grace, and gratuitous bounty. The idea of making it an article of vulgar traffic,—and allowing the greasy and purse-proud sluggards of the city to get it for their money, without owing any obligation to us,—is intolerable. No !—not one savoury back of grouse, or wing of pheasant, shall descend their plebeian throats, but by our voluntary generosity.

“ Now, were such designs practicable, they are not very liberal or reasonable ;—and were they ever so reasonable, they are not practicable. It is not a very rational or liberal spirit, which resolves, that the greatest wealth and station shall be unable to command this

luxury, unless connected with property in land. But really, the question is not whether opulent towns shall consume game; but whether they shall do so by lawful means, or unlawful:—for game they will have, so long as Money retains the sovereignty of this lower world.* I am not here talking of the sport;—for, though no sportsman myself, I approve of it as one of the inducements to a country life;—the love of which forms the happy and useful distinction of the higher classes of this island. Neither am I without indulgence for that generous and hospitable pride, which a country gentleman feels, in assembling his friends around him, to share the sports of the field. This is one of the highest and most honourable enjoyments of his condition of life; and the law ought to protect him in it. The autumn parties which meet at the country-houses of our nobility and gentry, exhibit perhaps the most agreeable form of society now existing in Europe. All this, I would be sorry to discourage. But what is there in the sale of game to prevent such enjoyments? Why should not the landed proprietor, after supplying himself and his friends, send his surplus game to the market, instead of throwing it to the dunghill? Or why should his neighbour,—whom circumstances or inclination withhold from field sports,—be interdicted, either by law or opinion, from selling his game,—any more than his corn or beeves? Every real advantage of having

* ——— Fidemque et amicos,
Et genus, et formam, *Regina Pecunia* donat.

HOR.

game may be retained, if you relinquish but this silly and exclusive feeling, that no one else shall get a share, except by gratuitous bounty. Even this, it is plain, cannot be enforced :—for amidst all the struggles of impotent legislation :—amidst all the grudging, and watching, and heartburnings, and violence, and bloodshed, used in protecting game :—still the markets are supplied. Let but this fanciful, ineffectual pride be given up,—and, as surely as the abolition of duties puts an end to smuggling,—so surely will the trade of a poacher be destroyed,—or at least greatly narrowed,—by the lawful supply of game. It is not enough to declare the selling of game legal. It must be actually sold. Country gentlemen must supply the city consumers, otherwise the poacher will do it for them.

“ For the honour of our country, I wish that the experiment were tried. Let it not be said that our landed proprietors,—for the gratification of an idle exclusive pride,—persist in a system leading to scenes of violence which disgrace the laws and character of a civilized people.”*

* Since the foregoing paper was written, the law against the sale of game has been repealed : But the prejudices of the country gentlemen remain unrepealed. Hence, the market is still supplied by the poachers,—who have only derived increased encouragement from the abolition of the penalties.

LX. NED, THE GARDENER.

Ergo, aut adultâ vitium propagine
 Altas maritat populos,
 Inutilesque falce ramos amputans
 Feliciores inserit.

HOR.

Laborieux valet du plus commode maître
 Qui, pour te rendre heureux, ici-bas pouvait naître ;
 Antoine, gouverneur de mon jardin d'Auteuil,
 Qui diriges, chez moi, l'If et le Chevreuil,
 Et sur mes Espaliers, industrieux génie,
 Sais si bien exercer l'art de *La Quintinie*.

BOILEAU.

CONSIDERING that tender interest in my concerns which prevails among all classes of my readers, they will doubtless be gratified to learn that I have a Gardener here in the country, called Edward Dawson, who is blessed with an eldest hope of the same name. Whether they trace any connection with the fair one who gives her name to the well-known song,—or with the hapless hero of Shenstone's ballad,—I do not know ;—but if they came originally from the other side of the Tweed, they have been so long transplanted into our soil, as to be true Caledonians. The young man, to distinguish him from his father, was known in the family by the name of *little Ned* ; and though now one of the stoutest and handsomest fellows in the parish, still retains the same appellation. He is a lad who has been remarkable from his infancy for his intelligence and good disposition.

It is well known that the gardeners of our rich neighbours of the South are chiefly from Scotland. This is a fact not a little creditable to the sharpness of our northern wits; as there is no branch of manual labour which requires so much assistance from the head, as that of gardening. But it is equally true, that no Scottish gardener thinks his education perfect, till he has practised some time in England. My friend Ned having petitioned for this advantage, I sent him thither for two years; and being completed in his noviciate, he returned, fully accomplished, to assist and succeed his father. He manfully resisted all Southern corruption on the purity of his native dialect: but, in his own science, he made great advances; and has got all the *Linnean* names so familiar on his tongue, that I am almost afraid to cope with him. Ned had several good offers to stay in England, but the *amor patriæ* prevailed.

Joined to this heroic passion, however, one of a more private nature had its influence. For he had been but a few months returned, when he came to me one morning, while in the country, somewhat above a year ago;—and, after hesitating, blushing, stroking down his hair on his forehead, and moulding his hat into all manner of shapes,—he at length opened to me, that he was desirous, with my approbation, of changing his condition. I had received a hint of this from my sister Judith, to whom his mother made the first approaches; but Ned, with a due regard to etiquette, thought that the communication in form should come directly from himself.

"What," said I, "you green goose,—a wife? What should you do with a wife?"—"I don't know, your honour; but I was thinking to try."—"Go to,—you are a fool:—how old are you?"—"Deed, sir, I'm lang past three-and-twenty;—rising twenty-four like."—"A reverend age, truly, for the head of a family:—and who is the unlucky girl you have thought of?"—"It's a daughter o' William Dodds o' the Hillside, an't please your honour;—Jeanie Dodds:—we've been lang acquaint:—they're dounce weel-doing folk;—and they, and their forebears, have been mony generations on Sir William's land. Your honour has seen them at the kirk on Sundays."—"Yes, yes, I know them;—they are good people;—that is so far well. It is well to choose a bird of a good nest. But where do you propose to live, Ned?—Your father's house is full enough already, in all conscience."—"I was thinking, if your honour would be agreeable to let me have the auld house, below the wood, at the bottom of the Witch-holme:—the same as Marget the hen-wife used to live in:—it would be easily fitted up:—the joists and couples are fresh:—and Tam Rule the wright says a little matter would do the rest."—"O, I see you have every thing cut and dry:—Well, as to the house, there is no great objection, if that were all:—but then it is too far from the garden:—you will grow lazy, and never be there betimes in a morning, to help your old father."—"O, your honour may trust me for that:—I'll be steadier than ever."—"How old is the girl?"—"Some nineteen, sir, or thereabout, I think they say."—"A mighty prudent

match, on both sides, I see.—And pray, Ned, how many children do you propose to have, by the time you are forty.”—“ Dear me, sir, how can I tell?—That’s as God pleases:—wealth o’ bairns, and wealth to gi’ them, as the saying is:—My father has brought up nine creditably under your honour’s family,—besides three that’s gone;—and may be, if I be spared, I may do the same.”—“ Aye, Ned;—but nine and nine make eighteen:—I think you had better wait a year or two.”—Ned here hung his head,—and examined the edge of his hat carefully, three times, round. My logic seemed to satisfy his reason better than his inclination. “ I’m sure,” said he, “ I would be quite agreeable to oblige your honour:—but the house is so convenient ev’n-now:—and the story has got wind somehow, through the country side:—and the poor lassie would be affronted like.”—“ Aye, Ned,—and the lad would not be over well pleased:—so I may spare my good advice, for I see you are resolved to play the fool.”

As this was spoken in a tone of dismissal, Ned began to move towards the door:—then stopping, and turning half round, he said,—“ But I hope your honour’s no angry.”—“ No, no, Ned,—not very angry:—but you’re a great goose, nevertheless.”—“ And about Marget’s house?”—“ I’m to be down that way myself this forenoon, and will take a look of it.”

To make a long tale short,—honest Ned was married; and settled, with his pretty bride, in the old house, made almost as good as new. It is a lovely spot by nature, and Ned has lavished all his art in

adorning it. It is clustered with roses, sweet-brier, and honeysuckle; the delicate Acacia, and spangled Gum Cistus (dropping its transitory blossoms like falling-stars):—While the flower-beds below exhibit a radiance of fair Exotics. Some old slovenly habits lingered; but, by dint of repeated admonitions, the place came to be kept tolerably neat:—though it cost us a hard struggle to get the dunghill removed out of sight, and the tubs emptied at the back door.

My predictions were soon in the way of being accomplished; for within a year, this young couple became the parents of a thriving boy. Indeed, he was pronounced by all the gossips in the neighbourhood,—including my sister Judith, who, though a mere theorist, piques herself on her skill in such matters—to be the finest child in the parish. Ned held him up, to be baptized in church, the following Sunday, with the characteristic seriousness and decency of our Scottish peasants. What had ailed the young varlet I know not;—but during the ceremony, he set up such a squall as disturbed the whole congregation. Poor Ned blushed to the eyes,—partly from shame,—and partly from real concern for the babe:—And after the service ended, he had to undergo many sly gibes, as to the stout lungs and indecorous behaviour of his first-born. He would have named the child after me; but I would by no means consent to an interruption of the third generation of Edwards.

These events happened since we last came to the country: and things went on well, till within these few days; when Ned came up, one morning, and told us

that the child had been ailing some time, and was taken very ill the evening before :—that he and his wife had sat up with it all night ;—but he feared it was still growing worse :—and he now came to see if any thing could be had to do it good, out of Miss Judith's physic closet.

I have already hinted at my worthy sister's exploits in the healing art ; but the present was too serious a case for her handling ; and as our friend Dr Scalpel, who lives about six miles off, at the County town, was expected that day, at any rate,—I promised to bring him to see the child. Meantime, I desired Ned to be of good heart ;—and the benevolent Judith, seeing him exhausted with anxiety and want of rest, made him swallow a bumper of port wine, and carry the bottle home with him. I charged him, for his life, not to give the child a drop of it ;—nor indeed any thing else, in the way of remedy, till the Doctor came. Judith was too impatient to wait for me, and set off for the cottage immediately. I staid a while for the Doctor ;—but growing somewhat distrustful of Judith's proceedings, I followed soon after, to prevent all improper interference.

I found at the cottage, besides its usual inmates, Ned's mother and sister, who had come to lend their aid. On inquiring whether any thing had been given to the child, the old woman confessed that she had brought down a blister, and a bottle of stuff, which had been formerly sent her husband for the *pains*. These nostrums they had tried to administer ;—but, fortunately for the poor babe, without suc-

cess. When I asked how she could venture to give the child what she knew nothing about ; — “ I’m sure, sir,” said she, “ it a’ came out o’ the doctor’s shop, and was honestly paid for ; — and I thought it “ could na but do the bairn good.” When I arrived, I found my sister and the old woman busy at concocting something on the fire ; but I resolved to stay in the house, and prevent all further attempts of this kind, till the Doctor came.

The young mother sat by the fireside, with her babe lying on her knees. It was now little more than six weeks old, and had been suckled at her own breast. It seemed to be then in an inflamed and feverish state ; and lay restless and moaning. The poor girl herself was pale and exhausted, — the picture of impatience, fatigue, and anguish. Unaccustomed to suffer (for this had been her first grief), — and every feeling absorbed in sympathy with her distressed infant, — although she constrained herself to answer my sister and me with some respect, yet to all others her replies were hurried and fretful. Poor Ned was sitting beside, and a little behind her, — watching the child over her shoulder. On one of these hasty answers, he laid his cheek close to hers, and said, in a gentle voice, — “ My dear Jeanie ; — he’s my bairn as weel as yours, — “ and I’m full of sorrow : — But when we think who “ it is that sends trouble, it’s our duty to be patient.” “ — O, Edward ! ” said she, turning and laying her head on his bosom, — “ It’s very true : — But to see “ the dear lamb in such suffering ; — it tears my very “ heart to pieces : — And then, maybe, to lose him af-

“ter a’;—after a’ my sore travail”—here her voice was choked, and she sobbed bitterly.

In a short time, the worthy Dr Scalpel arrived, with whom I must, at some future period, bring my readers better acquainted. He is a singular compound of learning, disinterestedness, simplicity, and a pedantic love of his profession,—in which, however, he is esteemed very skilful. He now came forward, and looked at the child, with the habitual calmness of one accustomed to such scenes;—not to say, a sort of professional *gusto*, on taking up a new case;—while the unhappy mother, fixing an anxious gaze on his countenance, seemed endeavouring to read in it her sentence of life or death. Poor Ned’s cheek too grew pale enough,—though he commanded himself as well as he could. We all indeed, in our several relations, felt a good deal of interest in the result. The Doctor, after examining the child, feeling its pulse, and asking a few questions, observed,—“That the febrile “ symptoms were considerable:—That he apprehended “ incipient *Phlegmasia* in the *Duodenum*; a languid “ action of the Absorbents; and obstructions in the “ *Primæ viæ*:—That there were also appearances of “ *Cynanchè* and *Dyspnœa*; but he hoped the approach “ of *Trachitis* might be prevented.” Had it been a less serious occasion, the effect of these terrible words on the several bystanders, would almost have provoked a smile. The poor parents seemed to feel them as so many fiery dragons whose claws were fixed in their helpless babe. The old woman had an air of seriousness and doubt, as at a loss for their meaning. While

my sister,—putting on her most learned look,—and diving to the very bottom of her science,—nodded assent to the Doctor's *Diagnosis*.

He then said, that he would send the child something to take, from the surgeon's shop in the village, and desired them not to keep the room too warm. He added, that he had some patients to visit in the neighbourhood, and would call again in the evening. On a hint of mine, he warned them against giving the child any thing besides what he sent; and my sister said she would stay herself, and see it properly administered. I cast an expressive glance at Judith,—and another at the lotion which she had been preparing when I came in,—and which still stood in the window;—but she affected not to understand me.

As I walked homewards with the Doctor, I asked what he thought of the child. He answered,—“Why, ill enough:—I am afraid things are too far gone for my help:—but had the silly people sent for me in time:—However, I will come back and dine with you,—and see whether there be any change for the better in the evening.”

At dinner, the Doctor, notwithstanding this distressing case, got into his usual spirits and loquacity. I treated him to a bottle of my best old port,—a liquor of which he is a devout admirer,—though within the bounds of moderation. After finishing the bottle between us, he rose to visit the sick child. He held the concluding bumper between his eye and the window,—scanning its rich bloom with a complacent smile. Then, drinking it off, he exclaimed, with a smack of

the highest relish ;—“ Tincture !—perfect tincture !—
“ Nothing like this in the whole *Materia Medica*.”

This second visit confirmed the Doctor's fears. When he returned from the cottage, to drink tea with us, he said that he scarcely expected the child to put over the night ;—and that he had prepared them for the worst. He proved a true prophet ;—for word was brought, early in the morning, that the poor babe was dead.

A few days after, I found Ned in the garden, and asked him for his wife.—“ But middling, sir,” said he,—“ it was a sair blow on so young a lassie :—She “ has nane to keep her company now, when I'm “ away.” Ned was busy digging at a flower border ; and, after a few minutes silence, he resumed, without looking off his work :—“ Your honour was fearing “ we should hae owr mony bairns :—There's little “ chance o' that, I think, if they a' gang like poor “ Neddy.” This was spoken in a tone half respectful, half reproachful, which somewhat smote me on the recollection. “ Be of good cheer, Ned,” said I,—“ no “ fear but you will have plenty, that will thrive with “ you yet. I expect to see another Neddy in twelve “ months' time.”—“ No, no,—Your honour maun let “ me ca' the next after you :—I hope he'll hae bet- “ ter luck.”—“ With all my heart, Edward ; and he “ shall have the best frock and cap of any young “ gardener betwixt the Tweed and Johnny Groat's “ House.”

LXI. ANTIPATHIES.

Vitæ disconvenit ordine toto.

HOR.

For some there are, love not a gaping pig ;
Some that are mad if they behold a cat ;
And others, when the bagpipe sings i' the nose,
Cannot contain ———.

SHAKSP.

IT is an old remark, that, on the average of human life, we suffer less from great calamities, than from the recurrence of petty troubles, and daily annoyances, which throng and press upon us without intermission. There is another remark, not less true, which I must add, by way of rider or corollary to the above;—that when we have no great distresses to engross us, we have an art of so embellishing and amplifying the smaller fry, that they fill up the place of their more gigantic brethren. This disposition is to be traced both in public and private life. If an exhausting war, or threatened invasion, or national scarcity, absorb our attention, we have no time to think of lesser grievances. But the moment the sky brightens up, and relieves us of our fears, we fall to worrying one another, as cordially as ever, about a turnpike road, or a vestry election. In the same manner,—as to those evils which beset the private state,—if we are tolerably easy in our health and circumstances, we fret about a broken tea-cup, or an ill-dressed dinner ; and call

Heaven to witness our endurance when a party of pleasure is interrupted by a wet day.

Still, it must be granted that there is something not altogether despicable in the assaults of this *small infantry* of pigmy vexations; for their numbers and perseverance balance, in some measure, their single insignificancy. It is with such, accordingly, that my chief warfare is carried on. I can hardly expect success in abating the signal calamities of life; but I may flatter myself with hopes of, now and then, achieving a victory over these puny tormentors. They, indeed, often draw their birth from certain propensities in ourselves, fostered by negligence or bad habit, and not incapable of cure. The subject which has engaged me in these reflections, is the chapter of *Antipathies*,—a source of plague to those whom they beset,—and, through them, to others who are free,—which I deem of sufficient importance to call me into the field. To this I am the more disposed, that, of all weaknesses, I consider the one in question to be the most entirely owing to education, or indulgence;—to be the most capable of prevention by a good system;—and even of cure, by a little resolution in the patient himself.

Miss Edgeworth has treated of this subject with that sound and practical judgment which distinguishes most of her lessons. She considers the weakness alluded to as one of the manifold prejudices of feeling, and imperfections of reason, to which youth is liable; and as being much aggravated by defective discipline, and ill example. Ordinary antipathies are, indeed,

more ridiculous than seriously hurtful: but no one should suffer himself to remain permanently under impressions which he knows to be false and absurd; for one submission of that sort only paves the way to others.

An instance of a very common antipathy occurred, in my presence, some time ago, under circumstances which gave it a strong impression. It was in a gentleman of rank and accomplishments;—one who had travelled;—seen much of the world, and profited by his observations;—and who, on more than one occasion, had shown marks of a sound and firm mind, wholly untinctured with whim or affectation of any kind. He was dining one day, with some other company, at my house; and was conversing agreeably after dinner; when, on the entrance of my favourite Cat,—whose panegyric I formerly pronounced,—one of the most harmless, beautiful, and cleanly creatures in the world,—he suddenly changed colour, faltered, and showed marks of the greatest agitation;—till at length, on puss's nearer approach, he fairly started up, leaped over his chair, and rushed out of the room. People say that there is no arguing with such prepossessions. I, however, used the liberty of speaking seriously to my friend about such a weakness. He took my counsel in good part, and resolved to conquer his aversion. To this end, he procured a kitten;—gradually reconciled himself to its playful tricks—(and few spectacles are more pleasing than the exuberant hilarity of that creature);—and signalized his triumph, the other day, by caressing, on his knee, my poor

puss, who had reduced him to such shameful flight but a few months before.

In our sex, these weaknesses are unpardonable ; but, though more excusable in the other, it is a silly mistake to suppose that prepossessions of this kind are becoming, as marks of delicacy and softness in the female character. Strength of mind is a quality suitable in both sexes ; and I have observed that women who had the nicest sense of female delicacy, as well as the strongest affections, were equally remarkable for a superiority to petty alarms, and groundless dislikes. While, on the other hand, such fantastic agitations are commonly the mark of light undignified feelings, as well as of a weak understanding.

I remember, many years ago, visiting a museum of natural curiosities, with a large party of both sexes. As we were looking at some specimens of natural history, one of the inferior assistants brought into the room a human skull, distinguished by a malformation which had caused the death of the patient. This was not, perhaps, a well-judged object of curiosity for such visitors ; but the intention was polite ; and the poor man was not a little disconcerted at the general agitation, alarm, and horror, which he had excited among the fair spectators. One of them, however,—the most beautiful and attractive of the whole party,—remained unmoved ;—took the skull in her hand ;—examined it with a composed and melancholy attention ;—and then returned it to the assistant, with an expressive sigh. I leave my readers to judge whether

she or her companions shewed the most elevated sense and feelings on this occasion.

I was lately favoured with a visit from Mr Bundle and his family, who are not very distant neighbours in the country. Mr Bundle is a good natured, soft, common-place sort of a man, who goes about the usual affairs of life in the usual way; and whose chief concern, like that of the old citizen of Moliere, is *faire bouillir son pot*. He has a wife and five daughters, who form the ruling party in the household; and who have the misfortune of being beset with aversions, alarms, and antipathies, of all sorts and sizes. Mrs Bundle, esteeming these to be as natural parts of the constitution as talking or sleeping, never thought of checking them, either in herself, or her daughters; and, whenever her husband interfered, would interrupt him with—"O, my dear, how can the poor things help it?" Thus, by dint of encouragement and example, feelings, which at first were slight, have grown into a goodly crop of impertinencies.

On the arrival of this worthy family before dinner, the first offence arose from the old gentleman himself, who, as he entered the house, was carefully scraping his shoes on the iron at the door-way. "Dear Mr Bundle!" exclaimed the spouse;—"La, papa!" reiterated the young ladies;—"what a horrid noise!—" "it makes all one's blood creep." At dinner, although the dishes, and other appliances, were much after the common way, this sensitive family found room for many sufferings. In the first place, Mrs Bundle

never could endure, from a child, the look of mashed turnips, which, unfortunately, presented themselves before her. Then, there were stewed eels, which Miss Sukey held in abomination. Miss Molly was shocked at seeing a gentleman eat with a steel fork. And Miss Sally was quite overcome by the grin of a roasted hare, which stared her full in the face;—till she was happily relieved by turning its tail. These various grievances were redressed, as far as could be contrived without utter ruin to the dinner, (though sorely to the dislocation of that lucid arrangement on which my sister piques herself in the ordering of her dishes,) and matters went on tolerably well till the second course;—where, as ill luck would have it, the principal *entr  e* was a roasted pig. At this horrid apparition, four of the six ladies started up, and betook themselves to flight. On the other hand, my neighbour of the quorum, Mr Goosetooth,—knowing the merits of my genuine Chinese breed,—had reserved his fire for this occasion: and, indeed, honest Bundle himself cast a hankering eye at the pig,—remarking that he never was allowed such a thing at home. In this dilemma, matters were compromised, by the pig being transferred to the side table, whence slices were brought for the gratification of its admirers.

The entrance of the cheese forced two of the young ladies to their smelling bottles: and the china-ware which held the dessert reminded a third of a person without the skin. As to Mrs Bundle herself, the rhind of a melon always gave her a shuddering; but

she was satisfied with its being removed to the farther end of the table.

In the evening, we walked to a summer-house at the extremity of my lawn, built on a point of rock, and overlooking a pretty wooded valley, and stream, which winds in a thousand meanders below. While I was pointing out the beauties of the prospect, and some finishing touches which I still designed ;—(indeed, the whole has been a happy enough thought of my own) ;—a beetle found its way in, and kept buzzing and humming about the room. It is impossible to describe the consternation which this arrival occasioned. The whole five misses, and their mamma, flew screaming and huddling into a corner, exclaiming, —“ What shall we do !—What shall we do !”—“ Why, I think,” said I, opening a window, “ that we had better let it out.”

Next morning, when coming in from my walk before breakfast, I met Mr Bundle, and hoped he and his lady had rested well. “ But so so,”—replied he ; “ there was an unlucky mouse scratched behind the wainscot, as we went to bed ; and she kept me up, half the night, in pursuit of it.”—“ What a pity,” said I, “ you did not ring for the cat.”—“ Cat !”—exclaimed he, “ Heaven help you !—she would as soon have slept in the room with a royal tiger.”

The young ladies, I found, had scarcely fared better than the old folks ;—for one was put into the Chinese room, who had a horror at Indian paper ;—another heard the owl cry ;—and a third actually detected a spider on the curtains of her bed.

I will close this subject with a connubial dialogue; which lately took place between a friend of mine and his lady, who has an unfortunate tendency towards antipathies. He was remonstrating with her on such unreasonable prepossessions:—"Really, my dear," said he, "this folly is growing on you every day. You "detest this,—and you abhor that,—and another thing "makes you shudder. I suppose the next antipathy "will be at your husband."—"Very likely, my dear," replied she, in her sweetest tone,—“you know no—“thing could be more natural.”

One word of serious admonition, before I conclude. If those who give way to such slight distastes, will not try to correct them from a regard to their own happiness, or the comfort of their friends,—let them reflect a little on the real sufferings of human life;—on the fate of the poor;—on the reports of prison and hospital committees;—on cold, and filth, and nakedness, and want, and disease. Let them expose themselves to *feel*,—or at least to *think*,—*what wretches feel*;—and they may then be shamed out of their puny complaints and annoyances.

LXII. A FUNERAL IN THE COUNTRY.

Funus interim persequitur,—fletur.

TER.

SOON after I came to the country, my old servant John came to me one morning, and said, " William Gourlay's wife, sir, of the Glen ;—her, as you know, " died the other day :—poor woman, she had a sore " lot in this world :—Well, sir,—she is to be buried " to-morrow at one o'clock ; and William sends his " respects to your honour, and hopes, if it would not " be inconvenient, that your honour would be agree- " able to come, and take the *first lift of the coffin*."— " Give my compliments, and say I will come :—and, " John, you may take down to-night, one or two bottles " of wine and spirits :—and you and Kitty may go and " help the poor people in the morning :—and, d'ye " hear, tell William not to be at any foolish ex- " pense."

This man is tenant on a small farm of my own. His wife had been a person of somewhat better station, and had married him, for his good looks, against the consent of her friends, who never would be reconciled. Indeed, poor William's conduct left them some excuse for their obduracy ; for though of an honest open temper, and affectionate to his wife and children ; he was an unsteady, reckless creature ;—still running after new projects ;—liable to imposition from every knave ;—always repenting and forming

good resolutions, which he forgot next day at the ale-house. In this way it happened, that, in spite of all his wife's labour and good management, their condition had grown rather worse than better. Constant anxiety,—an increasing family,—and vexation at her husband's folly,—whom yet she could not help loving,—combined to ruin the poor woman's health; and brought on a lingering disease, which at length had carried her to the grave. As her behaviour and manners were marked by a propriety above her sphere, she had been much respected by all around: and, indeed, for her sake, and that of her children, I had not only winked at many irregularities on the part of her husband; but had made every effort to reclaim and keep him right. But it is easier to correct positive faults, than constitutional carelessness and indiscretion.

I went down to the cottage next day, at the appointed hour, where I found many persons assembled for the ceremony. They were all of the male sex, as our custom, in this country, does not permit the attendance of females on such an occasion. The major part were seated on the ground, before the house,—while two persons handed round spirits, cake, and cheese. The cake consisted of an ordinary wheaten loaf, with currants and carraway seeds diffused amongst it,—this being the only foreign luxury which the family had provided. At the door, were fastened by the bridle two or three horses, which had brought some of the better sort from a distance. The riders had been admitted within the house; and to

them I was forthwith ushered. I found sitting round a table, three or four of the neighbouring farmers ;—with the clergyman of the parish, the surgeon, and exciseman. The same fare was provided for them as I had seen without ; only a bottle of wine stood on the table, along with the spirits. Here the poor man himself, and two of his boys,—the only part of his family at home, and of a suitable age to attend the ceremony,—were waiting on the company. He was dressed in an old-fashioned suit of black, which he had preserved from his youth,—a cravat and weepers, which he had borrowed from me,—and a hat bound with crape, which hung down in long folds behind. He held in his hand a handkerchief, which he had often to apply to his eyes. When we were all seated, and the glasses filled round, we drank to his health and that of his family. He thanked us with a voice, trembling, and scarcely audible.

The coffin was placed on a bed in a small adjoining room, whither we were soon after summoned, to see the lid screwed down. There was some little ornament upon it, which William whispered me was done by the workmen, without his knowledge : “ But,” added he, “ she was come o’ a good kind, and it’s no unsuiting.”

I asked for his eldest daughter,—a girl about sixteen,—and already remarkable for dutiful behaviour, and considerateness above her years. He told me that she was in the back room, taking care of the children ; and would be glad to see me. People of this rank in

life, though they feel strongly, are less delicate and fastidious than their superiors ; and are gratified by the respect of such a notice, rather than hurt by its intrusion. I accordingly went into the room, and found her sitting with two women, her neighbours. She held the youngest child in her lap ; and was trying to restrain the others from play, and from peeping out to see what was doing in a ceremony to them so strange and new. This occupation had engrossed her attention, and dried her tears ; but on seeing me, they burst out afresh ; and the poor babes gathered round, amazed and frightened at her sobbing. I caressed the children ; and spoke some soothing words to her ; and soon after took my leave. When I shook hands with her at parting, she could only articulate a few broken words, about the kindness I had always shewn them ; and a hope that I would continue their friend, now that their best support was taken away.

The funeral soon after began to move on, and proceeded towards the churchyard, which is about half a mile distant. The coffin was supported by wooden poles, passed across underneath, at the extremities of which several of the attendant company were placed as bearers. As there was no other support, the weight was considerable ; so that one set of bearers, after carrying a short way, were relieved by others. The *first lift* to which I had been invited, was esteemed the post of honour, and assigned to the most respected guests. After bearing the coffin about a hundred yards, we gave up our places ; and in this way different parties succeeded each other, during the whole

progress. The husband himself followed, as chief mourner, at the head of the coffin ; with one of his boys on each side, and a third still younger in his hand. His attention being now all collected on the melancholy scene before him ; and the thoughts of past endearment, and final separation, rushing upon his mind ; his grief grew loud, and he continued sobbing the greater part of the way.

The little boys were dressed in their Sundaysuits ;—all the respect which they could afford to the occasion being a piece of crape tied round their hats and arms. Their features were marked by a sort of serious wonder ;—and concern about their own behaviour, in a new character, before so numerous an assembly. This expression, however, now and then, gave way to that of the innocent thoughtlessness of their age.

The procession advanced through a romantic lane, bordered with lime-trees in full blossom. The beauty and softness of the day, the song of birds, the hum of bees,—all the stir of cheerfulness and life,—seemed smiling as in scorn on this scene of grief and mortality. We reached the churchyard ; and stood about the grave, while the last ceremony was performed. When all was over, the poor man came round bareheaded ;—shook hands with us, one by one ;—and thanked us for the respect we had paid to him and his family.

Knowing the propensities of people in this station, I took him aside, and said I hoped that there would be no drinking or carousing at his house in the evening ;—a custom indecent in itself, and of ill example to his children. He promised obedience ;—and I must do

him the justice to say, that, to the strict letter, he was faithful ;—but he had reserved a *salvo*, to which I did not advert ;—and, accordingly, adjourned to the alehouse, with a select party ;—among whom he moistened his grief so effectually, that he could set no bad example, within his own house at least, for that night. On my reproaching him with this irregularity, a few days after, he replied ;—“ ’Deed, I wad hae been very agreeable to do your honour’s pleasure ;—but the folk wad na hae thought the poor woman that’s gone properly respeckit, without taking a drap, just by way o’ compliment.”

I seized this occasion to give him a serious admonition as to his future conduct ; above all, in the article of matrimony. He declared that he never would think of such a thing again ;—a promise on which I own my reliance was very slender. William, however, disappointed me ;—not, indeed, by altogether avoiding the noose ;—but by selecting a partner to whom I could make no exception. She was a plump, good-tempered, well-conditioned woman, with some money ;—who has been kind to his children,—and is not of an age to increase their number. When I expressed to him my surprise how so thoughtless a pate as his had such a knack of choosing good wives ;—“ ’Deed, your honour,” said he, “ I was just ordeened till’t.”

LXIII. THE WEDDING-DAY.

Dare jura maritis.

HOR.

As I was taking the air about my farm, some time ago, I saw an equipage driving towards the house, which I soon recognised to be that of my neighbour Sir William Constant. There is no branch of his family to whose company I am indifferent; so I hastened homewards by a path through the fields, and when I reached the house, found the carriage standing at the door. On asking the footman who had come, he answered, "Only my lady."

When I entered the drawing-room, I found her ladyship in close converse with my worthy sister; and, by the countenances of both, I perceived that something of more than usual interest, and rather of an agreeable colour, had passed between them. Lady Constant was about to communicate the import of it to me, but Judith interposing, exclaimed,—“O, do not tell him.—Come, brother, try if you can guess what is going to happen.”—“Nay, sister,” said I, “I know not,—unless you intend making some man happy with the possession of your fair person.”—“Pshaw!” returned she, “I declare, Lady Constant, I would not tell him, for his impertinence.”—“Nay, my good sir,” said her ladyship, “you are not so far wrong in your guess about the business;—only you mistake the party. In short, your friend Louisa,

“ my eldest daughter, is going to be married to Mr
“ Hartly, of the neighbouring county : and as no one
“ has so good a right to partake of all our happiness
“ as you, I came over to tell you, among the first.”
Of the probability of this event we had heard something before,—but only from the tongue of rumour. I was, therefore, much pleased at hearing it so authentically confirmed. Mr Hartly is a man of large estate, and heir-presumptive of a peerage : but his personal character is even higher than his possessions or prospects.

After expressing my warmest congratulations on a union so eligible in fortune, connections, and merit,—I added, that, notwithstanding all this, I was not to be defrauded of my old bachelor's jokes against Miss Louisa ; and would come down, in a day or two, to enforce my right.—“ Besides,” added I, “ she is an
“ arrant little jilt ;—for you know I was the first husband she chose, as soon as she could speak. I will
“ have amends of her, I'm resolved.”—“ Indeed,” said Lady Constant, “ she seems conscious of her demerits ; so to avoid you, and other tormentors, she
“ has taken refuge with her Aunt, till the bustle of
“ inquiries and congratulations be over. But, knowing how good a Christian you are, she expects from
“ you, not only forgiveness, but an act of kindness.
“ She desired me, as she went away, to make an especial request, that you would write her a long letter on the duties of the married state,—fitted to help
“ a novice through its difficulties. You have already
“ given her, along with the rest of mankind, some

“valuable hints : but she would have something for her own particular use.”—“Madam,” replied I, “all that I could say to a daughter of yours, on such a subject, would be comprised in four words—*Follow your mother’s example.*”—“Nay, my good friend, I will not affect to deny that my girls will be the better for what they have seen at home ;—or that education and example are of some value in forming the character of a wife. But, in truth, my married lot has been so fortunate, that I have had no room for exerting those virtues which seasons of trial demand. I hope and trust that my daughter will not be less happy ; but still it is as well to be prepared for something worse. Come, you must not deny her :—and when she has enjoyed the treasure sufficiently herself, she will not grudge it to the rest of her sex ; but will return it to its proper drawer in the *Cabinet.*”

The letter was accordingly written, and my fair friend Louisa was married. I had the honour of assisting at the ceremony, in my *puce* coat, with mother-of-pearl buttons ;—a pretty fancy of my own for the occasion :—while my sister Judith came forth in a flame-coloured silk, and Mechlin head, which astonished all the beholders. With the particulars of this happy occasion I will not now detain my readers. The elegance of the company,—the splendour of the equipages,—the bustle and gaiety of the servants,—the importance of the old butler,—the pensive happiness of the parents,—the hurry and occupation of the sisters,—the delight of the children,—the gen-

teel appearance of the bridegroom,—the maidenly timidity and beauty of the bride;—all these things may be imagined. I would fain have gratified my fair readers with a description of the dresses; and conscious of my own inadequacy to such a task, I engaged the great artist who does up such matters for the *Morning Post*, to come down from London, by a Leith smack, expressly for the occasion:—but he has basely disappointed me. So, whether the bride's robe was of true or imitation lace;—whether her shoes were kid or satin;—whether her petticoat was trimmed with *lama*, *chenille*, or *claire la lune*,—I profess it is out of my power to unfold. Nay, I cannot even be very positive whether the sleeves were *escarpées*, or *à la folie*:—nor undertake to specify the number of feathers in her plume. Suffice it to say, that the *tout ensemble* was enchanting: and I could almost have addressed her in the fine verses of Otway,—

Sure, framing thee, Heav'n lavish'd all its care;
As its own beauty it designed thee fair;
And formed thee by the best-lov'd Angel there.

When the ceremony was ended, and just before stepping into her carriage, the fair bride thanked me, with a kind squeeze of the hand, for the good advices in my epistle; and it is by her permission that I now present it to my readers.

“MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—The task you have assigned me is one of those which is extremely

difficult, from its apparent obviousness and ease. When one has said that the duties of a wife are comprised in loving her husband, her children, and her home; and acting prudently for their advantage;—one has, in a manner, exhausted the whole subject: yet these lessons are so trite in doctrine, and,—to the honour of my fair countrywomen, I will add,—so common in practice,—that any enlargement on them would be tedious. I have heard Scotland termed *the paradise of married men*. And, truly, when I look around me on the manifold examples which it exhibits of domestic virtue and happiness, in all conditions of life; I must allow that the compliment is not without foundation. This, no doubt, betokens some merit in our sex;—for when men are corrupt and unprincipled, they cease to value the highest virtues in a wife;—but the chief praise rests with yours.

“ Habits of such a kind, once diffused, perpetuate themselves; and thus become the happiness and glory of a whole people. What secret connection there is between the preservation of female purity, and the other virtues,—it is perhaps not easy to trace: but the rule appears to be without exception;—that, wherever this virtue is little observed by the one sex, there is no lofty principle, or delicacy of honour and integrity, in the other. On considering the national character, and tone of morality, throughout the several states of Europe, this observation will, I think, be confirmed. It implies a high compliment to our own island, but I believe it to be a just one.

“ The dignity and virtue of a wife become those of

her children. Her example teaches even more than her lessons. And it must surely be a reflection gratifying to a noble mind, that on the training she gives her offspring, depend much of the welfare and honour of her country. This is an ambition to which her sex may justly aspire, because it is exerted within her strict and proper sphere of domestic life.

“ There is one other topic nearly connected with this subject, to which I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of alluding ;—I mean, the peculiar nature and tenderness of maternal love. There is something in this sentiment so strong,—so pure,—so unalterable,—so utterly forgetful of self,—so devoted and identified with its object,—that it seems exempted from the common frailty of human passions, and to resemble, in some measure, the constancy and benignity of divine love. The other affections of our nature,—as we meet with them in the fictions of poetry,—are sublimed to a degree of intensity which is rarely to be found in real life. But a mother’s love admits of no exaggeration. It exists around us, every day, with as disinterested a fervour and purity as ever was bestowed in the creations of fancy. I have myself known many mothers, who, I am sure, would have cheerfully died, to procure any great good to their children. You, my dear friend, have not far to look for such an instance ; and, I must plainly tell you, that if you ever be unworthy of her to whom I allude, you will have less excuse than any other.

“ But to return to my more immediate subject. I have been blamed for allowing, on a former occasion;

too little credit to love, as a source of happiness in the wedded state. But I have truly no ill will towards the little deity, when found in good company ;—that is, along with discretion, competency, the approbation of friends, and, above all, good principles. I only say, that these have a better chance of giving permanent happiness without him,—than he has without them. When they can be united, as in your case, it is best of all.

“ A woman, on marriage, loses, in a great measure, her individual character. Her affections, her wishes, her prospects, her interests, her station in society, become, in a manner, absorbed in those of her husband. The definition of this relation, given by the Roman lawyers, has something not unexpressive of the intimacy and completeness of its union. Marriage, say they, is an *Intercommunity of all things human and divine*.* Were married persons in general to regard their connection in this solemn and endearing light, we should have fewer of those paltry bickerings for superiority, or disputes about trifles, which so often trouble the serenity of connubial love. In such matters, I must say, that the wife should set the example of concession ; and, if she take the trouble to study her husband's temper, she will soon arrive at far more sure and pleasing means of sway, by gentleness and persuasion. In the words of the graceful Metastasio,—

Siete serve, ma regnate
Nella vostra servitu.

I am far from saying that this disposition to compli-

* Omnium rerum divinarum et humanarum consortio.

ance should be all on one side. A husband of generous feelings will be ready to meet it half-way. Married persons, indeed, having been commonly bred up separately, must have some opinions and habits different from each other ; and should both be on their guard, at their first union, against being too much surprised or shocked at such differences. These, experience tends every day to reconcile.

“ As for those ladies of spirit and cleverness, who support the dignity of their sex by assumption, and snappishness, and expressing contempt for their husbands’ understanding,—I shall only say, that they cannot show a worse proof of their own. No woman can fail in respect towards her husband, without impeaching her own choice. On the other hand, women who really govern their husbands, by right of a superior understanding, take care never to show their power.

“ Women, when first married, having been perhaps accustomed to indulgence,—and flattered, during courtship, with all the idolatry of love,—are sometimes apt to be too *exigent* of the attentions of a husband ; and to think him cold or neglectful, if he intermit in his first assiduities, or allow himself to be engaged with the other concerns of life. This is a weakness which no woman can fall into, who takes a just interest in her husband’s reputation ; and who is more gratified by his making a good figure in life, than by a few trifling attentions to herself. There is, on the other hand, a variety of the husband species, who, having no occupation of his own, lays the burden of his idleness on his

poor wife :—dangles after her from room to room :—and is, in the homely proverbial phrase, *tied to her apron string*. This is a perilous calamity ; and if any thing can justify a cudgel or heeltop, in the hands of a loving spouse, it is surely excusable in such an extremity.

“ As to the old complaint of ladies growing careless, after marriage, in those arts of pleasing which gained a lover,—and thus forgetting *the way to keep him* ;—it is not the less worth remembering for being a little hackneyed. I shall only say with Hamlet,—‘ I pray you avoid it.’

“ One most important duty of a wife,—though little enlarged on by romance writers,—is a prudent economy,—attention to her domestic affairs,—and care of her husband’s fortune. This virtue must, of course, have a due relation to circumstances and condition of life ;—but there is none so high, where it may not find room for exercise. In the superintendence of her household a woman appears in her proper element ; and much of her husband’s comfort and credit in life depend on her judicious management here. Where a husband has had a turn to expense, many families have owed their safety to the discretion and economy of a wife. Nor need I add, how perfectly consistent such virtues are, not only with every feminine grace and accomplishment, but with a liberal hospitality, and even with acts of the noblest beneficence. Indeed, without economy, no effective or habitual beneficence can exist.

“ As to the various sorts of injuries, and ill usage

which women receive in wedlock,—both in high and humble life,—that is a chapter far too ample to be entered on at present. I shall only hint at one, which is supposed to be the hardest to bear of all,—Infidelity. I hope I shall not be suspected of underrating this crime in my own sex, when I say, that the obligations of the spouses here,—though strong on both sides,—are not equally so. From the opinions of society,—and indeed from the constitution of nature,—a failure in this virtue is far more criminal in the wife than in the husband ; and of this strictness the sex have no reason to complain ; for to it they owe their influence and consideration in society. Take from women that respect which they derive from uncompelled purity, and they would be oppressed and degraded, as they are in all barbarous nations. With men the case is otherwise. As long, therefore, as an erring husband behaves with external decency,—and brings no pollution before his own house and family,—I would counsel a wife to forbearance. She may reclaim him by prudence and gentleness, when extremes might throw him off for ever, and shipwreck her unhappy family in the struggle. Cases may vary in their circumstances, and require different modes of proceeding : but the above I would recommend as a general rule. As to the doctrine of *reprisals*, maintained by certain spirited dames, I shall say nothing. A woman must be already half-abandoned,—and lost to all sense of the virtue and dignity of her sex,—to whom such a notion could even present itself.

“ Some of your sex, my fair friend, may think that

I have laid down a very pretty manual of restraint and submission on the one part, and of tyranny and indulgence on the other :—but I am not afraid that you should think so. My chief apprehension is that, on considering this dull and desultory sermon, you will be satisfied that I have performed the promise with which I set out,—namely, of saying nothing. Yet my lessons, however trite, may be of use as remembrancers, if not as instructors ;—and it is from forgetfulness or inattention, rather than ignorance, that we commonly go astray. That you may long live to observe them,—or rather never to need them,—and hence to enjoy all the happiness which you merit, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate humble servant,

“ THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.”

LXIV. THE DAYS AFTER THE WEDDING.

Quid datur a Divis felici optatus horâ ?

Hymen ! O Hymenæe ! Hymen ades ! O Hymenæe !

CATULL.

AFTER the happy couple had taken their departure, as recorded in my last paper, a numerous list of friends remained, for some days, to enjoy the hospitality of Sir William and Lady Constant. Mr and Mrs Megrim, however, insisted on returning home next morning ; as the sleeping out of their own bed, two nights running, was an act of desperation not to be contemplated.

Sir William's country seat is one of the most noble in our land ;—combining the beauties of highland and lowland scenery : While the taste of the proprietor has assisted Nature, without overlaying or disguising her. I have already mentioned Sir William as the model of a British country gentleman : and this he is, in no respect, more, than in residing upon, and attending to, his own estate. Besides his taste as an ornamental improver, he is considered as one of the best practical farmers in our quarter. From a thorough acquaintance with his own property, he knows whether his tenants are skilful or ignorant ;—industrious or idle ;—whether, in short, they are doing justice to him, and to themselves. If they fall into difficulties, he knows whether these proceed from misfortune, or from fault. And, while he holds out every encouragement to the well-doing ; he also shews indulgence to the less successful, where the failure has arisen from no want of diligence or honesty.

With equal, or even greater care, does he look after the more humble dwellers on his ground. Their cottages are solid and comfortable. They are encouraged to neatness within doors ; while their little paddocks without, decked with roses, sweetbriars, jasmine, and the stately holyhock, shew a perfect wilderness of hues and odours. Such things are pleasant indications of the condition of a peasantry ; for they begin not to appear till the most pressing wants are supplied. But Sir William's care is far from stopping here. He knows intimately the state of every family on his grounds. He advises them in difficulties ;—assists

them in misfortunes ;—employs them in health ;—relieves them in sickness. In short, he acts under the belief, that Providence, in bestowing on him so large a measure of the goods of fortune, has imposed on him a grave responsibility in their use :—He considers that he is bound not merely to enjoy, but to impart :—and holds himself, in some degree, but as the steward of that Power whose paternal care extends equally over all his creatures.

In these works of wisdom, charity, and love, Sir William is assisted by his excellent partner :—Indeed, by his whole family. They have been bred up to “ learn the luxury of doing good,” and spend much of their time in that indulgence. Whatever calamity happens around, they are present, like a healing balm, to soothe and soften it. They supply knowledge to the ignorant,—help to the helpless,—encouragement to the good,—rebuke to the erring,—but followed, on amendment, by forgiveness. Nor have their efforts been in vain. They have diffused around them industry, comfort, and virtue. And in the happiness and gratitude of the humble objects of their care, they enjoy a reward, second only to the testimony of their own conscience.

Nor must those engaged in such pious works be too easily disgusted, should they fail to find, in the peasantry, those interesting beings who appear in novels and romances. They must be prepared to meet with rudeness and indelicacy ;—at times even with selfishness and ingratitude. But let them not despair. Let them never forget their own great

advantages of competency, education, and example. Let them persevere in well-doing; and they will surely relieve, and probably reclaim.

Neither let it be supposed that I recommend indiscriminate bounty. That will do more evil than good;—and more encourage the evil than the good. Gratuitous assistance should be chiefly confined to cases of sickness and misfortune. While the poor are in health, the best form of charity is knowledge and employment.

Such are the duties and pleasures which await the Family of a British Country Gentleman, who reside on their own ground. Of the extent of the benefit which they thus confer upon their country, should any one doubt, let him look to unhappy Ireland, and be convinced.

But to return to lighter matters. The morning after the marriage ceremony was as bright and blooming as the fair bride herself had been. And as soon as the important matter of breakfast was despatched (for a Scottish breakfast, *teste ipso Johnsono* is a memorable meal) many projects of amusement were chalked out by the males of the party. Some went a-riding;—some a-fishing;—some a-shooting:—While the junior branches (including Sir William's younger sons, and my own little boy) were all for a rowing-match on the lake, under the auspices of Admiral Truman, and Tom Tiller, his old boatswain. The worthy Admiral, when nothing happens to cross the grain, has a fund of good nature and boyish hi-

larity about him, which makes him, both literally and figuratively, *quite in his element* on such an expedition.

As for the ladies of the party, they had more serious business on hand. This was nothing less than to write the news of the wedding to their numerous correspondents;—a concern too grave to admit of either neglect or delay. Accordingly, the fair creatures, having got possession of two luckless M. P.'s, who happened to be present, (Sir William himself making his escape, on the plea of business)—down they were set to the manufacture of *franks*,—for that day,—and the next,—and the next, (in spite of many obtestations that they had to write their constituents on weighty state affairs), till they were sucked as dry as an orange skin. In this condition they were liberated by their insatiable despots; and told that they might now go a-shooting; and the sooner they were out of the way the better. “For my part,” said a young lady, as the last senator disappeared, “I never could see the use of a Member of Parliament, except to give one a frank now and then.”

Sir William had engaged me to take a walk about his farm; but as this was not to commence for some time, I continued in the drawing-room, among the fair scribes. I affected to be reading a newspaper; but kept one eye sufficiently elevated above the margin to see all that was going on. What activity was now displayed!—What quires of paper covered!—What crossings and recrossings,—perpendicular,

transverse, oblique, or undulating. The very noise of the pens, as they glided along the polished paper, sounded like the rasping of many files. What powers of description were now called forth :—What learned commentaries on complexions and characters,—airs and graces,—flounces and laces. How much would I have given for one of those eloquent missives, to help out my barren genius. As I became absorbed in this idea, I forgot my *incognito*, and looked around me so earnestly, that I was straightway detected :—“ Only see that villanous Keeper,” cried Miss Charlotte Constant,—“ lying *perdu*, and watching us like a grimalkin from her hole. He will have us popt into “ his crazy CABINET as sure as sixpence. Let us, by “ all means, turn him out of the room.” Sentence being thus passed, execution did not linger. The whole conclave started up, (headed, I blush to say, by my sister Judith, who was scribbling away with the best of them), and advanced against me in menacing array. “ Out with him !—Out with him !—Toss him in a “ blanket !—Tear him to pieces !”—resounded from every ruby lip. In vain did Lady Constant interfere to protect me. In vain did Lady Evergreen make a faint demonstration in my behalf ;—more faintly supported by Miss Phebe Pliant. The hostile phalanx was implacable. And I only escaped the fate of Orpheus, by a brisk lateral movement round the table ; and so diagonally to the door. Here, Sir William entered on the instant, and, under his cover, I effected my retreat. I must, however, add, that the honourable baronet did not take this forcible ejection

tion committed against my person, in the serious light which so grievous an outrage demanded.

We proceeded forthwith on our walk. Sir William, as I have said, is an active farmer: I myself am so, in a smaller way: and there are constantly subsisting between us,—or rather between our domestics,—certain little amicable rivalries, touching carrots and clover,—pigs and bullocks,—ale-brewing and cheese-making;—with other the like branches of rural economy. I had rather the advantage, on the first move: for we happened to enter the field where my two sheep were feeding, whose merits (in the eyes of my own shepherd at least) have been already recorded. I asked Sir William's shepherd what he thought of them. "'Deed, your honour," said he, "they are real bonny beasts:—prime fat *wethers*, past doubt:—but then they've had a summer's grass mair nor ours." Sir William, however, now lured me to a field of Swedish turnips, which were indeed superb. His overseer and mine had carried on an arduous struggle about the weight per acre; and the former, who was now present, could not conceal his anticipations of triumph. "Your honour," said he, addressing me, "will be so good as make my compliments to *Geordie*"—(indicating, by that familiar appellation, my grand vizier, George Broadcast),—"and tell him that I'll be ready to weigh wi' him whenever he likes,—either by *troy* or *tron*." We then visited the dairy and cheese-room, which, to be sure, were on a scale far beyond my pretensions: but still I could not,—in justice either to Judith or her pure Ayrshire

breed,—give up the unrivalled delicacy of our home-made Stilton.

After a pleasant *morning*, as it is called in the vocabulary of fashion,—(read *afternoon* in the language of the sun),—our various outlying parties assembled at dinner. During this repast, loud were the boasts, and marvellous the narrations, of the juvenile sportsmen, in describing the adventures of the day. Partridges and pheasants had flown away with loads of lead in their body, which might have levelled a rhinoceros;—trouts and salmon of ponderous obesity had wriggled themselves off, though hooked with the hold of a cable. One could not but wonder at the perverseness of those creatures, who, since they were to die at any rate, might as well have graced the bag or basket of their victors. Various other instructive topics were started, during the progress of our meal; while the good cheer, and choice wines, received ample justice from the hungry sportsmen. Wherever their efforts had misgiven, there was no failure here.

In the evening we had music and dancing for the young, and a quiet *rubber* for the old. For my own part, I stole off to bed about midnight; but left the light-headed and light-heeled *juveniles* in such active motion, as seemed unlikely to end in rest for many hours to come.

Such was THE DAY AFTER THE WEDDING. But, on this auspicious occasion, my good friend Sir William did not choose to limit the enjoyments to the Manorial Castle. The next day was devoted to an

entertainment for the tenantry :—the day following, to one for the cottagers and labourers on his land. With the first of these classes, Sir William himself, and most of our party, dined, in the hall of his antique and stately mansion. Many were the cheerful toasts given, and flowing bumpers consumed. The beauteous bride, and her happy partner, were loudly remembered. At length, the oldest of the tenants, —a fine-looking venerable man,—stood up, and proposed, in a parting cup, the ROOFTREE OF THE HOUSE ;—and the cordial welcome, the long-resounding gratulations, with which this honoured symbol was received, left an impression more pleasing than any part of the scene.

The guests of next day were too numerous to be admitted within doors : but tents were pitched on the lawn, at an early hour, where a plentiful banquet was supplied : and, after dinner, the happy rustics enjoyed a dance on the green till sunset. Throughout the whole festival, the party from the mansion mingled in the sports ; particularly the sons and daughters of the house, who assisted their parents in the pleasant labours of hospitality. That, on this occasion, there occurred a larger issue of ale and mountain dew, than the strict laws of temperance allow, I am not prepared altogether to deny. But there was no offensive excess. And the chief manifestation of the genial liquid appeared, at the close of all, in the vigour of three farewell cheers, which tore Heaven's concave, and made the hills and forests ring.

LXV. SCRIBLERUS REDIVIVUS.

CHAP. XXVI.

Account of a New COURT OF CRITICISM instituted by the renowned MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS, with a Report of the proceedings thereof.

GROSSIUS hæc Rhadamanthus habet durissima regna,
Castigatque, auditque dolos.

VIRG.

ABOUT this period, we find our illustrious scholar engaged in one of the most important designs of his eventful life, viz. the establishment and conduct of a new COURT OF CRITICISM for the hearing and deciding of all questions in matters literary. As his papers are fortunately very full on this topic, the particulars shall be given in his own words:—

“ Having deeply weighed and contemplated the state of modern letters, and the strange disorder whereunto things are tending, for want of the schools and oral teaching of the ancients; I bethought me that nothing would more contribute towards the bringing of the matter under due method and controul, than the instituting of a supreme authority for judging in all matters literary, whether civil or criminal. Hereunto I was the further moved by the example of the late egregious, and my very esteemed friend, Mr Isaac Bickerstaffe (of happy memory), who, in that his day, did rear and establish a court, for the trial of offences, and settling of disputes, occurring under the Laws of

Honour, wherein he presided with much dignity and profit. It is well known that the rules and judgments which he applied toward the satisfaction of that delicate principle, remain recorded, for the benefit of posterity, in certain luminous reports, published in his work called *The Tatler*. Filled with emulation to follow so bright an exemplar, in a department not less grave and fruitful, I, some time ago, digested the plan of a new court, to be called the *Court of Criticism*, wherein might be brought to a speedy and satisfactory issue, all disputes, questions, and differences, crimes, misdemeanors, delicts, offences, and peccadillos in matters literary.

“As to my own proper qualifications for this great undertaking, I did flatter myself that the specimen I heretofore gave of my powers, in the report of the noted case of *Stradling versus Styles*, indicated a natural happy turn to the law, which made me not unfit for discharging some of its higher functions.

“The chief benefits which I looked for, from this my new institution, were, *first*, The shortening and putting down of all literary contests; with the stopping of a great effusion of bad ink, ill-temper, and muddy logic, usually accompanying the same. *Secondly*, The strangling in their birth a certain viperous brood of lies, tales, and slanders, bred and nurtured in the course of such warfares. *Thirdly*, The detection and pursuit of all manner of burglaries, pilferings, frauds, and petty larcenies, committed by authors on each other; bringing the offenders to justice; and restoring the goods to their true owners:—Albeit theft be

a propensity so ingrained in the children of song, that some hold its cure to be a supposition quite extravagant and out of nature;—like that of wit in a Dutchman, or honesty in an attorney. *Fourthly*, The settling and adjusting all claims of precedency among authors, dead or living, of whatever denomination, rank, or pretensions. And, *Fifthly*, The fixing an infallible standard of Taste and Criticism, whereby the world in general, and polite company in particular, will, for the future, be saved all trouble in thinking for themselves, or forming their opinion on books and authors, by having ample store of rules, *dicta*, and adjudged cases, to refer to, fitted for every subject and occasion.

“ Having formed and matured the plan of my new court, I straightway proceeded to carry the same into execution. My first step was to nominate and elect myself sole presiding Judge therein;—a choice which I am confident will meet the approbation of the learned, and of the enlightened public in general. I then proceeded to fill up the various subordinate offices, appertaining to a court of justice,—such as clerks and registrars, superior, inferior, and under-inferior;—auditors and sub-auditors;—mace-bearers, door-keepers, gown-stitchers, wig-dressers, fire-menders, ushers, criers, sweepers, and deputy-sweepers. The only thing yet a-wanting to those several respectable functionaries are adequate salaries, perquisites, and emoluments:—But knowing the liberality of my loving countrymen, in regard to all useful institutions of a like nature, I cannot doubt that my establishment

will soon be placed on a satisfactory footing in this particular.

“ Being penetrated with a deep respect for the wisdom of our ancestors, I resolved to adopt the form of trial by jury ; but herein a doubt arose, whether I should cleave unto the method used with us here in England, of requiring an unanimous voice in every verdict ; or be satisfied with the opinion of the major part, as prevaileth among our neighbours in Scotland. But when I reflected with myself, how rare a thing difference of opinion is among men ; and how reasonable it is to reconcile such difference, (when it doth perchance arise), by a small application of duress and fasting, (which moreover improveth the shape), I finally determined upon our wholesome English rule.

“ Accordingly, on Wednesday, the first day of this month of April instant, at ten of the clock before noon, I opened the sittings of the new Court, in a convenient hall, at the corner of Barbican, looking into Grub Street. Silence being proclaimed with due solemnity, by three several *Oyesses*, I began by unfolding, in a long and eloquent speech, the nature and objects of the new institution. I lamented the loss which society had hitherto sustained from the want of so useful an establishment ; explained the manifold advantages likely to result therefrom ; and concluded with laying down the rules of law to be followed forth in my judgments ; with copious comments on the duties of jurors, witnesses, practitioners, and parties. I then summed up the whole matter in

a luminous peroration, and ended by ordering the first case to be called on.

“ This was an indictment of petty larceny, preferred at the suit of Doctor Metrodorus Battlebrain of the Seven Dials, against Jeremy Limbertongue of the Inner Temple, Esq., for that he, the said Jeremy, did, against the faith and peace of our Lord the King, and the statute in that case made and provided, wickedly, theftuously and feloniously, and under temptation of the devil, steal, purloin, detach, remove, retain, and appropriate two metaphors, three allusions, and one abstract idea, value fivepence each,—all being the lawful discovery, invention, property, and progeny of the said plaintiff. The which crime was further aggravated, in that the said articles, so purloined as aforesaid, had been pointed out and shewn to the prisoner by the said Doctor, in the confidence of friendship, in the heart of a large quarto volume, composed and written by the said Doctor, long in print, where they had hitherto lain undiscovered. But now, the same having been so stolen, rifled, and appropriated by the prisoner, and turned to his own use and commodity, their loss would much impede the sale of a new edition when it should be called for :—all to the great hurt, prejudice, and discomfort of the said Doctor, against the faith and peace of our said Sovereign Lord, and so forth.

“ The prisoner being called on for his defence, denied the property in the plaintiff; alleging that the fore-said articles were hackneyed and of *jus commune*, or, at all events, abandoned, derelict, and *res nullius*; it

being impossible to bring evidence that they ever were seen in the Doctor's lawful possession, or indeed that any man living, except the Doctor himself, so much as suspected their existence. That he, the prisoner, should never have seen or known of them, had not the Doctor pointed them out to him, at his own chambers, where he gave them to the prisoner as a free and voluntary gift. Finally, that the prisoner had so much changed them for the better, that they could no longer be recognised as the produce of the plaintiff.

"I here could not but interpose and rebuke the prisoner for the light and careless style of defence which he set up in so grave a matter. The Doctor then brought forward his witnesses to the property, viz. his amanuensis and bookseller,—the latter, however, very doubtful, as it did not appear that he had ever opened the work. I then summed up the evidence, and left the case to the jury. Having retired some time, they came back and stated, that, after their utmost efforts, they had been unable to comprehend the two metaphors, or to fathom the depth of the abstract idea,—and hence could assign no precise marketable value thereto, so as to bring the case within the Statute of Plagiarisms. Sur quoi, verd. *Not Guilty*.

"Jonathan Sly was next brought to the bar, against whom it was alleged that he, living and being within the city and liberties of London and Westminster, had glanced, thrown out, discharged, and emitted, one certain sarcasm, exceeding sharp and pointed, in one certain doggrel rhyme or poem, by him then and

there made, manufactured, and vended, against the reputation and good fame of Mrs Dorothy Rambletown, widow, to the grievous wounding, hurt, and laceration of the same.

“ The prisoner at first pleaded a declinature of the jurisdiction of the court, on the pretence that the suit was merely a common case of libel. But this being justly deemed a high contempt, with a most audacious purpose of narrowing and abridging the authority and prerogatives of this high tribunal ;—he was fined in one shilling for contumacy, and ordered to plead to the charge. He then attempted to prove an *alibi* ; inasmuch as, during the whole week when the offensive matter appeared, and for one week before and after, he the prisoner was lying in a pot-house at Hackney, in a state of continued inebriation. But it having been deposed by credible witnesses, that he always wrote best when in that condition, the alleged fact was held a strong additional presumption against him, and he was found guilty.

“ I then pronounced sentence against him, in the most pathetic and eloquent manner, condemning him to make atonement, by writing a panegyric on the said Mrs Dorothy, twice as long as the libel. But the lady, after some consideration, thinking that this might only make matters worse, declared she would be satisfied by the prisoner asking her pardon on his bare knees, which was forthwith done in presence of the whole court.

“ The next case was a complaint brought at the instance of Ralph Simple, Gent. against Peregrine Tag,

of the Minorities, dealer in rhymes, verses, and other poetical ware, by retail. The complaint set forth, that he, the said Ralph, being deeply smitten and enamoured of the charms of Mistress Susan Eyebright, spinster, did, with a view of recommending his passion, employ the defendant to work up, fabricate, and manufacture a sonnet in her praise, of good and sufficient poetry, the lawful quantity and measure of this realm; for which he had paid the highest ready-money price. That the defendant, notwithstanding his agreement, had imposed on the plaintiff bad and damaged ware; inasmuch as the said sonnet having been sent to the aforesaid Mistress Susan, she did detect therein two false quantities, and one line short measure; besides a general deterioration below the lawful standard of poetry; and returned the same as unworthy her acceptance. By all which he, the said Mr Ralph, had suffered greatly in his character for wit; besides declining in the good graces of the said Mistress Susan, to the grievous disappointment of his passion aforesaid.

“ The defendant maintained in reply, that the verses were good and sufficient marketable ware, when they left his hands; and had either been spoiled and damaged by the plaintiff himself, or that Mistress Susan wished to give herself the airs of a critic. Upon farther investigation, and strictly cross-questioning the plaintiff’s witnesses, it came out, that, after the sonnet was sent home, he had spent three hours in revising and amending the same, with the help of his valet, and the *Ready Rhymer*. Whereupon,

as it appeared that he had broken bulk, and damaged the article *commixtione*,—the Jury returned a verdict for defendant, with costs.”

Here terminateth my first report of the sittings of the new Court of Criticism ; and from the specimen thereof now exhibited, I doubt not of a general impatience among the learned to be made acquainted with its further proceedings.

LXVI. JOURNAL OF A WINTER IN EDINBURGH.

—— Nil fuit unquam
Tam dispar.

HOR.

Look now upon this picture, and on this.

SHAKESPEARE.

THERE is a worthy gentleman whom, by the courtesy of Scotland, I call one of my neighbours in the country, though he lives a dozen miles off. His name is Thornhill. Though upwards of seventy years of age, he is still hale and active. The sole member of his family, besides himself, is a granddaughter,—the only child of an only child. He had the misfortune to lose her mother and father (his daughter and son-in-law), a good many years ago ; and his own wife still earlier. These domestic calamities preyed upon his spirits ; and he has since led a very retired life, devoting his chief care to the education of his granddaughter. He is a man of great probity and benevo-

lence, though of a hasty and splenetic turn ; for both which dispositions, good and bad, he has found indulgence in his habits of seclusion, and domestic supremacy. He seeks after all occasions of active beneficence ; but seasons his kind deeds with a tone of hardness and misanthropy in his words ; to which last, the objects of his bounty submit with great composure, in consideration of the former. His granddaughter is a very charming girl of eighteen, resembling him in all his good points, but not in his foibles. She has indeed had little reason yet to quarrel with the world, and preserves the gaiety of youthful hopes and spirits, tempered by feminine softness, and a sound understanding.

Last winter, Mr Thornhill took his granddaughter to our metropolis, to introduce her, for the first time, into the world, and allow her a taste of the pleasures suitable to her age. They have always lived together on the agreeable footing of authority softened by kindness on his part, and affection, mingled with respect, on hers. She always calls him *Papa*, having known no other in that tender relation ; and being his only descendant, will inherit an ample fortune.

On going to Edinburgh, it was agreed between them, that each should keep a *Journal* during their stay, which they were afterwards to communicate to each other. Mr Thornhill and his young lady lately spent a few days with us ; and he then showed me those two compositions, from which he permitted me

to make a few extracts. I chose such passages of each as corresponded in date and subject,—these seeming to portray most characteristically the age and turn of the different writers ;—and will now give a specimen of them,—beginning with the Journal of Mr Thornhill.—

Tuesday, 2d Feb.—Morning dull—Half repent of consenting to take Emily to town—Packing since four o'clock, yet many things left out—William tells me the young carriage-horse colded—Stupid in James to forget my powders—Did not use to find things so cross formerly in travelling—Chaise crammed with this girl's band-boxes and frippery—Roads very deep—That rogue Brickdust the contractor cheated us in the metalling—Cold room and bad breakfast at the *Boar*—Much fallen off since old Tipplewell's time—Took a spoonful of brandy in my tea for my stomach—My friend Sir Jacob's new gateway vulgar and heavy—Cannot say I admire the taste of my Lord Clump's plantations—Day cold and squally, with drifting showers from the east—One of the carriage-springs gave way, and stopped us an hour at a smithy by the road-side—*Mem.* To change my coachmaker—Young wheats looking ill, and little appearance of improvement in the country—Reach town after a long and fatiguing journey—Feel out of sorts, and retire early to bed.

Friday, 5th Feb.—Lodgings snug enough, but noisy, and very dear—Town so much increased, I scarcely know it—Cannot say for the better—New buildings too uniform, and much exposed to the north-east—Still prefer the striking irregularity of the Old Town after all—That pretty *Boulevard* of the Meadow, the

best thing about Edinburgh, and quite deserted—The new built churches heavy or tawdry—Admire the noble longitude, altitude, and variety of the High Street, and the fine solemnity of Holyrood House—Some of the *Wynds* and *Closes* narrow, but snug and sociable—Seem to me more confined than I remember them formerly—The Parliament Square a handsome thing, though spoiled by the late improvements—Regret those pretty Gothic structures, the *Cross*, and the *Nether-Bow Port*—Traced the course of the ancient City Walls, and found a good part remaining—They built well in those days.

Monday, 15th Feb.—Dined with Sir Joseph Dangle—Invited at *six* o'clock, but had no dinner till past *seven*, waiting for my Lord Snaffle and Sir Harry Martingale, who had been riding a match—Three courses and dessert—Service of plate—White and red champagne—Remember when Sir Joseph failed, and paid ninepence a pound—Company insipid, and no conversation—Tormented by old Lady Mumble, the whole time of dinner, about the way of using the Harrowgate waters—Went to the play at half-past nine, and found it near over—Performance bad—House over-lighted, and fitted up with too much tinsel—Constant stir and rudeness in the boxes, and talking louder than the actors—Pit also much degraded since change of prices—Only good manners in the gallery—An Edinburgh audience used to be a different thing in the days of Digges, Woodward, and Yates; and, even at a later period, when the great Siddons was in her prime.

Wednesday, 3d March.—Was persuaded to go with my girl to Lady Hurricane's ball, besides three other parties before, on same night—Bitter cold and snow, and

danger in passing from house to house—*Mem.* Never do so again—Suffocating crowds and heat within—Giddy with constant change and whirl—No society or conversation, the whole attention and strength being employed in preserving life and limbs—Set down, against my will, to Three Card Loo—Lost five guineas to Lady Shufflepam—No grace in dancing now-a-days—Great loss of the minuet—Dreadful crowding and confusion at supper—And after being seated, tedious—Persuaded to go back to the dancing-room after supper—Got Emily away, with great difficulty, at four o'clock—Went to bed quite jaded.

Cannot but contrast this with the elegant style of society in my youth—Remember drinking tea with my Lady Altamira M'Corkindale, at her house in Carrubber's Close, up six pair of stairs, where she saw the best company of both sexes—The hour five o'clock—The company seated in a circle round the room—No noise, no mixture, no vulgarity ; but polished intercourse of bows and whispers, in handing the ladies tea and shortbread—The ladies in *belle hoops* and *pompons* ; the gentlemen in lace ruffles and *solitaires*—All took leave by eight o'clock—We shall never see such days again.

Thursday, 11th March.—Employed the morning in giving Emily a lecture on her dissipated life—Represented the risk to her health, waste of time, &c., and spoke of returning to the country—After parrying the thing a while in jest, the dear creature, seeing me serious, said she would do whatever I chose—She knows my only thought is for her good—I agreed, however, to a week or two longer, but enjoined moderation—Took her to dine with my old friend Mr Duffle, the cloth merchant—A man of credit, and some standing in the magis-

tracy—Went at four o'clock—Good quiet people, and not carried away by modern kickshaws—Had a cheerful glass, and some rational conversation after dinner—Polite custom of *healths* and *toasts* observed—Explained to the company the true theory of the Sinking Fund—On our way home, spoke to my daughter in praise of the family, and recommended the society of the young ladies—Got to bed seasonably before eleven.

Tuesday, 23d March.—The morning being fine, took a walk before breakfast—Some symptoms of spring, which increase one's impatience for the country—On returning home at ten o'clock, found Emily still in bed—Am sure the poor child's health must suffer, and will positively go next week—She would have me take her to a match at horse-racing, which wasted the whole forenoon—Foolish crowd of people, and got my carriage injured in the hustle—Gentlemen rode themselves, their dress and manners in vain emulation of their grooms—Latter much the prettier fellows—Went to the concert in the evening—Performance indifferent, and audience proportionably noisy and inattentive—Room tawdry, and ill contrived for music—How different from the classic days of *Saint Cecilia's Hall*, and the performance of a *Puppo* or *Tenducci*—Then an elegant amusement, now a mere mercenary show—Music now-a-days nothing but chromatic display, or tasteless overwhelming din—No selection, no sentiment—Rudeness and bustle, as usual, at getting away.

Thursday, 1st April.—Raked about all forenoon, paying visits to take leave—Fit occupation for a day of fools—But the hopes of to-morrow carry one through—Get home in time to settle accounts, and begin to pack

up vigorously, to be off with the lark—To-morrow at least will be a well-employed day—If extremes meet, it should be the wisest of the whole year.

I will now add a few entries from the young lady's journal, choosing, as I formerly hinted, those which correspond in date with the foregoing;—that it may be seen how the same objects strike different spectators.

Tuesday, 2d Feb.—Sat up most of the night packing—Threw myself on the bed, but couldn't sleep for fear of not waking in time—Fine morning, only a little hazy, but it will soon clear—Rung for Biddy, to get papa's coffee, and bid William be punctual with the carriage—Debated with myself whether to take my flowered silk—Biddy advises me not, as unbecoming—Believe she is right, and have a mind to give it her—Sent Biddy with a few odd things to stuff into the carriage, before papa rises—Fear he will think my band-boxes troublesome, though I have really taken next to nothing—Beautiful morning—Gay landscape—Sung papa *Sorgete pastorelli* to put him in good humour—People at the inn so attentive and civil—Met with a little accident to the carriage, but of no consequence—Amused myself, while we stopped, with the smith's wife and children, and gave all the *bonbons* I had in the carriage among them—The prospect enchanting, with fine country-seats, woodlands, romantic hills and valleys, noble rivers, &c.—Got safe to town, after a pleasant journey, and not at all tired, only papa a little sleepy.

Friday, 5th Feb.—Lodgings rather small, and not in the most fashionable street—Pity to have stuck for a

guinea or two more a-week—Town more beautiful than I could have imagined—Spacious regular streets, splendid squares, noble public buildings, elegant houses—Then the Castle so grand an object, and the surrounding landscape so fine—Hope I may have time to take a few sketches—Papa persuaded me to go with him through some strange places in the Old Town, to show me where he had lodged when at school—Found them odious and dirty—Never go there again—Went to Lady Faddle's rout in the evening—Papa staid at home with a cold—Charming party, above three hundred, they say—Introduced to Mr N.

Monday, 15th Feb.—Pleasant dinner-party at Sir Joseph Dangle's—Lady Dangle has been so kind—Tells me her son will be down from Oxford in summer, and will come to visit papa in the country—Some of the best company in town present, Lord Snaffle, Sir Harry Martingale, the Miss Flourishes, &c. Lord Snaffle sat next me, and very entertaining; told me about his race with Sir Harry—Late of getting to the play; the company very brilliant, the acting admirable, and the house and scenery splendid; but the light thrown from the stage rather unbecoming—Miss Dimple quite pale and frightful—Wonder what made Mr N. dance with her, the other night, at Mrs Squeezem's—Some pleasant men came into the box, and I fear we talked too loud, for papa looked round once or twice.

Wednesday, 3d March.—Delightful evening—Three parties, besides Lady Hurricane's ball—Each as full as possible, and met with everybody—Danced a great deal with different partners, but chiefly with Mr N.—dances charmingly—Quadrille band quite perfect—Mr N. handed me to supper—Papa talked of going, but prevailed on to let us have one dance after supper

—Lady Turret's head much admired; the Miss Clumseys looked hideous in blue—Dancing continued pleasanter than ever till four o'clock—When we got home, never felt so little fatigued—Slept delightfully, and dreamed I was dancing with Mr N.—Wakened at noon by Biddy, to tell me that Miss La Blonde had brought my new *pelisse*.

Thursday, 11th March.—Morning rather heavy—Papa talked of going home—Quite willing, if he chooses, but his fears for my health are needless—Dreadfully stupid dinner at old Duffle's the clothier—Horrid vulgar party, and nobody one could speak to—The five Miss Duffles all on me at once—Wonder what papa has to do with such people.

Tuesday, 23d March.—Charming morning spent at the race, and a great deal of good company—The two gentlemen rode elegantly—At the concert in the evening—The audience quite select, and the performance inimitable—Papa talks of former concerts at a place called St Cecilia's Hall, somewhere in the Old Town—Must have been odious, and never could equal this—The room and orchestra decorated with great taste—Mr N. sat by me most of the evening—Understands music perfectly—Spoke with regret of my leaving town—Said he proposed making a tour through our part of the country in summer—Wonder if papa would like to see him—Handed me to my chair, and, I thought, sighed several times.

Thursday, 1st April.—Our last day in town—Melancholy thing taking leave—I should be quite out of spirits, but that papa seems so pleased—Promises to take me to the County Races in autumn—Long time till then—Packing somehow more troublesome than when we left home.

Friday Morning, 2d April.—Just setting off—Dear kind papa tells me he has invited Mr N.—I would now go with him cheerfully to *Siberia*.

I must remark in conclusion, that several of the above entries concerning Mr N. were blotted out with much care by the fair scribe, but not so effectually as to escape my deciphering. I may add, however, (in that confidential secrecy which subsists between my readers and me), that the visit above hinted at did actually take place. Mr N. was found very amiable, both by the old gentleman and the young lady. And this, in the concatenation of causes and effects, may, for aught I know, lead to something further.

LXVII. ENGLISH AND FRENCH TRAGEDY.

Segnius irritant animum demissa per aurem
 Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ
 Ipse sibi tradit spectator: Non tamen intus
 Digna geri promes in scenam; multaque tolles
 Ex oculis, quæ mox narret facundia præsens.

HOR.

IN a former paper I considered a theory of our English poetry, which distributes it into different schools, supposed to owe their character to the influence of the literature of different foreign nations upon our own. Among these influences, that which has

prevailed in Britain during the last century is said to be an imitation of the French model. This polished people, whose language has been cultivated and matured with peculiar care, have attained in their poetry a justness of thought, and scrupulous correctness of composition, which certainly afforded to their neighbours something worthy of imitation; and to this extent alone, as it appears to me, have we borrowed any thing from them. This, as before observed, may be seen, in its best form, by contrasting the finished composition of Pope, Gray, and Goldsmith, with the license and irregularity of our earlier poets. But with regard to the tragic drama (the only branch of the higher order of poetry wherein the French have excelled), it has so happened, that since their masterpieces have become familiar to us, few poets of high dramatic genius have appeared in this country. The poor imitations which we possess therefore of their style, are no just proof of the badness of the style itself; but only of the inferiority of the artists who have worked upon it. On the other hand, the force and freshness of genius possessed by the older masters of our drama reconciled us to those enormous violations of good taste, just composition, probability, and common sense, which occur perpetually in their works; but as little does this prove that those works would not have been better with fewer blemishes.

Since the age of Shakspeare and his contemporaries, the four great masters of the French tragic drama have flourished, Corneille, Racine, Crebillon, and Voltaire. Of these the first, second, and fourth, have each pro-

duced at least six pieces of first-rate excellence ;—the third has produced two. This amounts to a total of twenty plays of such merit, as I suspect it will try the literary stores of any country to equal.*

During this period of fertility in France, I am afraid that we have nothing to show except the few but exquisite dramas of Otway and Southern ;—our native Douglas ;—and the productions of Rowe and Lillo. I doubt whether any but an Englishman will hold the balance to preponderate on our side.

Nothing, to be sure, can form a more complete contrast than the early English drama, and the French, in their form, their merits, and their defects. In the higher elements of passion,—in force and variety of character,—in wide range of subject,—in sublimity,—in pure poetry,—in naturalness of dialogue,—our authors excel their rivals on the continent, as much as they fall short of them in the judicious choice and conduct of their fable, in dignity, elegance, and uniform propriety of composition. The great error of the reasoners on this subject, on both sides of the Channel, seems to be, that they confine their view exclusively to those points wherein their poets severally excel :—while, with the same ingenious blindness, they consider only the faults of their neighbours ;—

* From Corneille we have, of first-rate dramas, *Le Cid*, *Cinna*, *Horace*, *Polyeucte*, *Rodogune*, *La Mort de Pompee*,—I am not sure but I should add *Sertorius*. From Racine,—*Iphigenie*, *Athalie*, *Phedre*, *Andromaque*, *Britannicus*, *Mithridate*. From Voltaire,—*Mahomet*, *Zaïre*, *Alzire*, *Merope*, *L'Orphelin de la Chine*, *Tancrede*—with several others of considerable merit. From Crebillon,—*Atree et Thyeste*, and *Rhadamiste et Zenobie*.

and never suppose that there is room for something more perfect than either, by uniting the merits, and avoiding the blemishes, of both.

It is no doubt difficult for two nations, whose taste has been formed on models so dissimilar, to judge fairly of each other. The French, being naturally shocked at the monstrous absurdities and inequalities of our drama, which are more prominent and obtrusive than its beauties, reject the whole as the imperfect effort of a barbarous literature. When we again assert that the French tragedy is formal, declamatory, artificial, confined in its subjects,—we assert what is partly true; but we are unjust in saying that it is without passion or pathos; for it possesses both of the highest kind. No one capable of judging can read the *Iphigenie* of Racine, or the *Zaïre* of Voltaire, without admitting this. The maternal agonies of Clytemnestra, in the former drama, rise to the height of the terrible pathetic. What a splendid subject would this part have afforded for the powers of a Siddons. There is no such deep pathos in any tragedy of our language, except the works of Otway, Southern, and Home. But what I object to, in the present instance, is, that exclusiveness of taste, which cannot admire different kinds of merit. The person of just feelings, is he who can at once relish the boldness and variety of the English authors, and the exquisite composition of the French:—who, after admiring the splendid though irregular conceptions of Shakspeare, can turn with pleasure to the graceful pathos, the sentiment and harmony of Racine.

One cause of this mutual mis-judgment between

the two nations, is no doubt the imperfect acquaintance which each has with the language and literature of the other. Many of our countrymen presume to decide upon the French drama, with no other knowledge of it than what they obtained from their school exercises. While the French are in general so ignorant of our language, that they scarcely ever print a passage of English intelligibly.

But the question still recurs, which of the national dramas is the best, as they now appear ;—whether the English force, variety, and imperfection, or the French formality, elegance, and high finish. The two nations being themselves parties concerned, where are we to go for an umpire ? This notion has been started by one of the most impartial and judicious of the French critics ; but alas ! he finds the umpires scarcely less partial than the combatants. “ The English,” says M. Grimm, “ give the preference to their own drama. This is doubtless a superiority which France “ will never acknowledge ; but can she judge in her “ own cause ? Were the question to be tried by the “ other nations of Europe, we should probably lose it “ in Spain and Germany : but we might console ourselves with the hope of gaining it in Italy, and above “ all in ancient Greece. But do not such opposite judgments shew the same partialities elsewhere, which “ prevail between the two rival nations ?” This contrariety gives little hope of reaching any undisputed standard ; though I fear that the two nations whose verdict M. Grimm assumes as favourable to his own side, rank somewhat the highest in authority. If we

cannot, however, bring the matter to the determination of a standard absolutely certain, we may try whether an approximation, at least, to one may not be obtained, by considering what is reasonable in the nature of things.

That the ancient Greeks would have preferred the French strictness of form, so much resembling their own, to our rambling and incoherent variety, can scarcely be doubted: and their opinion is of high authority in any branch of art or letters. But a singular peculiarity in the history of their drama gave it a cast different from the common process of nature, and affected their opinions as to its form. The natural origin of tragedy, one would suppose, to be a dialogue imitating the conversation of men, when under the influence of deep passion: as comedy is an imitation of it, in the affairs of ordinary life. And in this form, accordingly, we see the rudiments of the drama among the Chinese, Indians, and other nations who did not borrow from the Greeks. But with this latter people, tragedy had an indirect and peculiar origin, quite unconnected with the imitation of human actions and passions. It grew out of a religious ceremony,—a hymn sung in honour of the Gods,—which gradually came to be diversified with a dialogue, on some passage or event, more or less connected with the occasion. Thus, what was among other nations, and is in nature, the true substance of tragedy, came to be, with the Greeks, subordinate and collateral. The human story was merely an appendage, superinduced on the religious ceremony;—and the story commonly

partook of the same simple and supernatural character as the hymn or chorus. This appears in the dramas of Æschylus; several of which are sublime religious allegories, diversified by a simple dialogue, little connected with the common affairs or passions of man. Even in the more finished works of Sophocles and Euripides, the business of the scene usually turns on some irresistible dispensation, where human interests and feelings have little room for display.

The Greek drama was therefore less an imitation of the affairs, contentions, and passions of men;—with all the variety of incident, and moral lessons by which these are accompanied;—than a gloomy religious spectacle, inculcating the decrees of a resistless fatality, and the inevitable misery of human nature. This scheme of the drama, considered merely in a literary point of view, produced several bad effects. In the *first* place, it left the singular and unnatural incumbrance of the Chorus, which had been originally the main branch of the spectacle, but which could have no place in a just imitation of human actions and dialogue. Even the noble strains of lyric poetry to which it gave rise, however exquisite in themselves, are irreconcilable with that verisimilitude which is the essence of the drama. *Secondly*, Connected with this form of tragedy, were those long inartificial monologues, which so often begin the piece, unfolding the plan of the future fable. *Thirdly*, it restricted the poet to a very limited range of subject,—confining him to the heroic ages, and to events and characters bordering on the supernatural. Accordingly, the

greater part of the Greek tragedies are occupied with the misfortunes of one or two families,—the race of Pelops and of Laius ;—wherein almost the only tragic agent is a gloomy religious fatalism. In the *last* place, this scheme of tragedy took away from it all the benefit of a moral lesson, which, merely in a literary view, adds so much to the beauty of the drama. No instruction could be reaped on the dangers of unchecked passion, the excesses of popular sentiment, or the remorse following on voluntary guilt, when men were hurried, by an inevitable impulse, on the commission of crimes, and then punished as if they had sinned wilfully. In this gloomy theory of providence, the Gods were represented as actuated only by malignity, or at best by a stern vindictive justice, which delighted less in protecting innocence, than in avenging guilt. In the words of the great Roman historian, (wrung from him, in the bitterness of his soul, on contemplating the crimes and sufferings of his age), “ Non esse curæ Deis securitatem nostram,—“ esse ultionem.”

LXVIII ENGLISH AND FRENCH TRAGEDY.

Fabula quæ posci vult, et spectata reponi.

HOR.

IN my last paper I threw out several remarks on the peculiar form of Tragedy which had prevailed in different nations, tending to show the grounds of that prepossession of taste which disposes each in favour of their own, and makes them unfit estimators of the merits of each other. My conclusion was, that all parties erred in carrying their leaning too far, and that some more perfect drama might be conceived than any we are yet acquainted with, by a union of the excellencies, and an exclusion of the blemishes of each. Some may allege that this is merely to ask for a perfection unattainable in the works of man; but I do not mean any thing so unreasonable. I think the object I have mentioned may be reached, at least in a degree beyond what has hitherto been achieved. It might be reached by a poet of the natural genius of Shakspeare, if subjected to the education and discipline of Racine. I know that it has been denied by the zealots of our ancient school that this culture would have been of advantage to Shakspeare, and his contemporaries; but I am humbly of a different opinion. I have ever thought it a matter of regret that the blaze of dramatic genius which then burst forth in England, had not been de-

layed till taste was more refined. We should then have had good plays: we have now only powerful scenes, and brilliant passages. Milton is a proof that true genius is not over-laid by culture.

The union, however, which I have recommended has in some measure been attained in the dramas of Otway and Southern; which, with a sufficient strictness of form, admit of a greater variety of character, and familiarity of tone and dialogue, than is allowed on the French stage.

With a view to the above general conclusion,—that an amalgamation of the English and French drama would produce something better than either,—I proceed with a few further remarks, in the same desultory order as before.

The French extended the scheme of their tragic drama considerably beyond that of Greece. Its main object and foundation with our modern neighbours (as it naturally ought to be) was a representation of human actions and passions, in the form of dialogue; and hence they chose for their subjects any event wherein these could be painted with energy. They dismissed the Chorus, as incompatible with a true imitation of nature; except in one remarkable instance,—the *Athalie* of Racine,—where that unmanageable member of the drama has been reconciled to probability, with a felicity and skill beyond what occurs in the ancient models. The French further introduced a wider diversity of subject,—greater refinement of sentiment,—a more complex and interesting fable. But what they chiefly affected was a stateliness of

tone, a dignity of deportment, thought, and language, which borders on the formal and declamatory, and occasions too great uniformity both of subject and style. The dramas of Corneille, where this manner chiefly prevails, approach therefore more nearly to epic than dramatic composition ; but at the same time, it must be owned, display a lofty strain of morality and poetry. Racine,—with greater power over the passions, and a deeper knowledge of the human heart,—from his habits of education, or an unfortunate distrust of his own powers, chiefly adopted the mythological subjects of Euripides, which proceed on the effects of supernatural and inevitable interposition. Two of his masterpieces, *Iphigenie* and *Phedre*, are formed on this model, and hence lose the beauty of conveying a moral lesson. In this respect, the plays of Corneille (particularly that of *Cinna*) have the advantage over those of his rival ; and the same merit belongs to the productions of Voltaire. But while the French drama excelled that of Greece in the variety of subject, and refinement of passion, it certainly did not improve upon it, in adopting a more declamatory dialogue, and artificial tone of sentiment.

What partly contributed to this last defect in the French drama, was the choice of rhyme for the language of tragedy, and of a measure so formal and stately as the *Alexandrine*. The Greeks and the English have been here more fortunate. Their dramatic measure approaches nearer to ordinary speech; and admits of breaks and irregularities suited to the

incoherent expression of passion. The same may be said of the Italians, the form of whose heroic blank verse is easy and simple, though, in the hands of Alfieri, it seldom declines from a rigid solemnity. His dramas may indeed be termed the muscles and sinews of Tragedy, without her flesh and colour. As to versification, however, the truth is that, in the extreme of certain passions, all attempt at a measured form is unnatural; and some of the finest passages of the English drama, are interruptions of the verse. For the expression of certain passions, however, as of a proud heroism, or lofty indignation, the majesty of the French measure is not unsuitable: and this, with its finish of composition, furnishes more splendid detached passages for recitation than are to be found in our theatre.

While on this subject, I cannot avoid saying a word on the manner in which the French actors manage the recitation of their verse. Having, I presume, heard it blamed by foreigners for its declamatory form, they run into the opposite extreme; and hurry it over with such rapid utterance—strange pauses—extravagant gestures,—and affected tones (alternating between scream and whisper)—that the golden numbers of Racine retain no trace of harmony, nor even of poetical rhythm or modulation. This is surely absurd. Declamation is not perhaps the best character of dramatic dialogue;—but still it gives scope to great splendour of poetry. Any one tolerably versed in the French language must admire such passages in their chief dramatic poets. But their actors totally

sacrifice this beauty, without substituting any other in its room.

Nothing can show a greater contrast than the mode of performing tragedy and comedy in France. The first is marked by every species of mountebank affectation:—The second by good taste, simplicity, and truth.

But the greatest blemish of the French drama, in the representation of passion, is the management of what is called the *Love Intrigue*. That this passion,—particularly when hallowed and confirmed by the ties of marriage,—is susceptible of the deepest tragic interest, we see in our own play of *Venice Preserved*; but it is justly remarked by Voltaire, that a youthful love scarcely possesses sufficient weight to support tragedy,—unless when infuriated by rivalry, jealousy, or some of the other greater passions. This is exemplified in the drama of *Romeo and Juliet*, which inspires little pathetic interest. Love, in this simple form, fades away before the ardour of parental affection,—the conflicts of ambition or avarice,—the fervour of religious enthusiasm,—or the agonies of remorse. But, on the French tragic theatre, love was introduced with peculiar absurdity. Corneille, who had no conception of its natural delineation, drew his pictures of love from the forms of artificial society in the *coteries* of Paris; and incongruously foisted these into his grave and lofty fables. In the terrible tale of *Edipus*, he introduces the heroic Theseus as a lover, and expresses that passion in the same exaggerated strain (I had

almost said *slang*), of conventional compliment which would have suited a French *petit maitre* of his own day. "However dreadful (says the warrior) this public pestilence may be, the absence of lovers is a far more cruel affair."* This is not the delineation of love, but the unconscious burlesque of it by one who knew not what it meant. Even the deep and natural feeling of Racine was perverted by the artificial habits of the society in which he lived, and he has deformed his fine plays of *Iphigenie* and *Phedre* by an insipid love intrigue. In the *Andromaque*, where it is infuriated by jealousy in the characters of *Hermione* and *Orestes*, he has expressed it naturally and nobly. Such, however, was the prepossession of the French for this, as an essential part of every tragedy, that Voltaire tells us that when he presented his *Merope* to the stage, the players inquired for the *roles* of the *Amoureux* and *Amoureuse*; and could hardly be persuaded to bring forward a play wanting such indispensable attractions. It was, in their eyes, a mere body without the soul. I may remark, that where Voltaire introduces this passion, he has treated it better than most of his countrymen, as in *Mahomet* and *Zaire*.

On the hackneyed subject of the dramatic Unities,

* Quelque ravage affreux qu' étale ici la peste ;

L'absence, aux vrais amans, est encore plus funeste.

It would be unjust to withhold the rational comment made by Voltaire on this couplet.—" On ne revient point de sa surprise
" à cette *absence*, qui est, pour les vrais amans, pire que la *peste*.
" On ne peut concevoir, ni comment Corneille a fait ces vers ;
" —ni comment il n'eut point d'amis, pour les lui faire rayer ;—
" ni comment les comédiens osèrent les dire."

I shall state my thoughts very briefly. As to the Unity of Action, this conduces so much to the right understanding of the piece, and to the rapidity and interest of the fable, that it must, I think, be considered as a requisite of the first importance. It is a beauty by no means confined to the drama; but is equivalent to that arrangement and coherence of parts, which is so essential to all good composition, whether poetry or prose. In this merit our older dramatists of England are extremely deficient;—trifling with, and forgetting their subject;—flying off to all foreign details and unconnected incidents;—and thus weakening the effect of the main impression. Let any one, for instance, consider how so fine a tragic subject as that opened in *Hamlet*, is frittered away and dissipated, in the mass of incoherent and inexplicable details which form the body of the piece, and he will be sensible how much the unity of action contributes to the effect of a drama. *Othello*, *Julius Cæsar*, and other productions of Shakspeare, are far less objectionable on this score. The French, on the other hand, perhaps carry their strictness here to an extreme of art; holding that no incident, nor conversation,—scarcely even a word,—should be introduced, which has not some tendency to forward the main action. This unbroken sequence does not happen in nature, and therefore cannot be just in an imitation of nature. A dramatic poet, like an historical painter, is no doubt at liberty to discard many superfluous or unsuitable circumstances which occur in nature; and select such only as harmonise with his

main design ;—but he must be cautious of using this liberty too far, lest his whole composition become artificial.

The Unities of Time and Place appear to me far less essential than that of Action ; and indeed require observance only in so far as they contribute to the latter, and to the just understanding of the piece. They were naturally involved in the scheme of the Grecian tragedy, where the Chorus never left the stage, and where there was originally no division into separate acts. They were adopted, in all their severity, by the French ; who, in their poetry, lean too much to the multiplication of artificial difficulties, and an admiration of the skill by which they are surmounted. In both of those national dramas, however, examples occur of an infringement of the unities of time and place ;—as in the *Eumenides* of Eschylus, the *Cid* of Corneille, and the *Tancrède* of Voltaire. Alfieri too, notwithstanding the rigid simplicity of his fables, approaching to baldness, sometimes departs from the unities of time and place.

If these unities could be strictly observed, without involving some absurdity, and without limiting the poet too much in the choice of a subject, and in the manner of treating it, they would no doubt be of some benefit, as they always tend to increase the verisimilitude of the scene. But as a fable can seldom be found so much compressed in time and place as to admit of this, without some sacrifice of probability ;—besides the evil of tedious retrospective dialogues at the beginning, and catastrophes in narration at the

end ;—it appears sufficient if those unities be so far observed as is essential to a right understanding of the fable.

In regard to the Unity of Place, for example, if the only changes be from one room to another in the same mansion, or to an adjacent street or garden in the same city,—the evil is not great. The mind easily slides over so short a space, and accommodates itself to the change. But if one scene be laid in Rome,—the next at Athens,—and the third in England,—we are puzzled and confounded. We perhaps do not at first perceive that there is any such flight at all :—next, we have to discover where the new scene lies. The attention is thus distracted, and the understanding confused, in forming a just comprehension of the story. And even if the change were announced by a herald, at every shifting of the scenes, the mind feels a sense of incongruity and difficulty in adapting itself to such rapid locomotions, while the body is all the while at rest. I do not contend that we are ever so far cheated by the cunning of the scene as actually to believe it true. But still there is a sort of partial and voluntary illusion, from which we are unwilling to be awakened by the shock of such rude impossibilities.

The same remark applies to the Unity of Time. The mind slips on smoothly enough, from hour to hour, over a space of one or two days. But when the duration of a drama extends to months and years ;—when, in the words of the French satyrist, we see the same individual “ A child in the first act,—a grey-

“beard in the last;” *—the illusion is broken :—we are puzzled to discover how much time has elapsed :—and are misled and confused as to the import of the story. A greater extension of time, and change of place, than the above, always detracts, more or less, from the coherence and probability of the action :—and, in so far, a reasonable observance of the two former unities truly contributes to the latter. Our plays of *Venice Preserved*, the *Orphan*, *Isabella*, *Jane Shore*, the *Fair Penitent*, *Douglas*, and some others, seem to carry this rule to all the strictness that is conducive to any good purpose. The three first acts of Shakspeare’s *Julius Cæsar* are also unexceptionable. At the same time, such a latitude as is taken in those pieces, leaves sufficient freedom in the choice of a tragic fable, as well as in the mode of conducting it. The only piece which I recollect, wherein a strict observance of the unities has been attained, without injury to probability, is the *Athalie* of Racine ;—and is one of the circumstances which distinguish that production, as an achievement of genius and art, above all other efforts of the drama.

To conclude,—the Unities of Time and Place are of moment, rather in the representation than the perusal of a play. And this is another reason of their inferior importance to the Unity of Action,—a beauty which is felt equally on the stage, and in the closet.

* “*Enfant au premier acte,—Barbon au dernier.*”

BOILEAU.

LXIX. ASSEMBLING IN TOWN FOR THE WINTER.

Omnia te adversum spectantia, nulla retrorsum.

HOR.

IT is well known to those who are acquainted with the movements of our intellectual metropolis, that the different seasons of the year make a greater change than they do elsewhere, on the internal aspect and population of the place. In the New Town particularly, this variety is apparent. That quarter of the city being chiefly inhabited by the wealthier classes, who are more or less frequenters of the country, its appearance, during the months of August, September, and October, is that of a deserted region. An eastern city ravaged by the plague is not more silent and solitary. Our spacious streets grow green. Window-shutters are closed. Painters and their brushes resound in the vacant habitations. The lonely domestic damsels, left in charge, ply their spinning wheels at the dining-room window; or gossip, for company, from adjoining houses. Friends, who by chance encounter in the forsaken streets, wonder, and greet each other, like brethren meeting in a foreign land.

Nor do the smirched and toiling denizens of the Old Town wholly escape the *burning instinct*. The little grocer, or dealer in tape and needles, drives his wife and daughter, in a one horse chaise, to his villa on the sea-side. Clerks, and their spouses, bundle out in the dilly, to *ruralize* at Newhaven or Porto-

bello. Gay apprentices indue themselves in Nankeen suits, and white hats, and sally forth on a romantic walk through the Highlands, with a spare shirt, and a volume of *Moore's Melodies*, in their knapsack. Even the soiled artificer who stews in the bottom of an alley, and the hardy mountaineer who plies in the streets as a chairman through the winter, take this period of annual migration to visit their remote kindred. All are on the wing. They mount the coach-top, or board the steam-boat, or pad the foot, to distant regions ; and leave their forsaken mother Edina weeping for her children.

Yet *tristful* as may appear the lot of those who remain behind, on this general dispersion, it is, when well improved, not without its enjoyments. As all nature renews by change, and variety is the spring of life, so I have sometimes found, in spending an autumn month at Edinburgh, a tranquillity of leisure,—a sort of soothing solitariness,—equally favourable to study and reflection.

There is something singularly beautiful in the aspect of nature with us during the month of August. We then often see the heavens covered with a thin veil of grey fleckered clouds, which, while they exclude the sun, diffuse a mild and transparent under-light throughout the landscape. The harvest is now advancing to maturity, and the soul is filled with a sense of happiness and plenty. Even the individual species of grain (like the forest trees) has each its beauty. The graceful oat, with pickles twinkling on their long stems: The smooth and silken barley which glistens

in the swaying breeze : The rich and heavy wheat whose nodding ears weigh down their slender support :—all are beautiful both in aspect and association. Then the pastures are yet green ;—the trees are in ample leaf ;—the whole surface of the earth is clothed and coloured. In short, I know no season to which the words of Virgil better apply—

Nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc frondent silvæ, nunc formosissimus annus.

It is my custom, when detained in town during this season, to devote one or two forenoons to long and solitary rambles in the environs of our fair city. Yet after gazing with delight on the face of things abroad, I feel a quiet satisfaction in returning, through silent streets and grass-grown squares, to my modest abode, and congratulating myself on the romantic solitude of the city.

But it must be owned, that the natural current of the soul, at this season, sets strongly towards the country. When nature puts on the languor of autumn ;—when the sun throws a mellow and subdued lustre over the discolouring woods ;—when the dropping leaf dances before the gust, and bestrews the pools and eddies of the stream ;—when blythe harvests call forth the reaper's song, and cheerful labour stores the support of another year ;—when all is busy without, and hearty and social within ;—who does not sympathize with the pleasures of the country ? And yet, much as we enjoy these pleasures while they last, we do not view their termination with

violent regret; for nature here, as at other times, compensates by succession, what she takes away in fruition. The shortening day, and waning sun, gradually incline us to the snugness of the town: And when the fields grow bare, and the last leaf quivers on the naked tree;—when cooler gusts, and showers whitening into sleet, indicate the approach of winter's hoary wing;—there is a sense of comfort in turning our back on the tempest, and seeking refuge in the social shelter of the city.

As the general flight of autumn makes so conspicuous an impression on the internal aspect of our metropolis,—so, in the opposite way, does the reflux at the beginning of winter. Such things are unnoticed amidst the immensity of London, but in a city like ours the effect is very apparent. It is not merely the increase of numbers;—but there is a stir of life, and bustle, and preparation, among all orders and degrees, which forms the completest contrast with the inaction of the preceding months. At this season of the assembling of the Courts of Law, the Classes of the University, and other numerous associations, I usually take a walk of observation through the streets, and remark on the busy scene around. Here, you see scrubblings and ablutions in the houses; with kindling of fires, and spreading of carpets, in preparation for the return of the inmates. There, you are stopped by a heavy-laden family coach rolling up to a mansion-door, with corded trunks, and valets and abigails on the *Dicky*;—while, in the depths within, is to be descried, an occasional visage, peering

from beneath a wilderness of band-boxes. Friends are seen suddenly recognising each other, and paddling across the dirty pavement to shake hands. Ladies, whose wardrobe has grown to age in the country, now amble from shop to shop, to renew its youth, by fresh trimming, or judicious patch-work. Porters ply you, at every turn, with printed notices of sale. Auctions are bawled, where you recognise an accomplished rhetorician, as of old, "*Vilia vendentem tunicato scruta popello.*" Lawyers are to be seen, with looks full of argument, hastening to the Parliament House. Here a country novice, newly bound to an attorney, is known by his *unfamiliar* air, and staring investigations after streets and houses. There a troop of schoolboys pace along with their satchels, to renew the combat of moods and tenses at the High School. While at the *Alma Mater* of the University, as every hour is chimed on the College bell, meeting throngs of students jostle in the courts and staircases, as they pass to and from their respective scenes of instruction.

But in nothing is this periodical season of assemblage more characteristic than in the number and nature of its newspaper advertisements. All the needs of life solicit our notice in the most seducing perfection; and on terms so low, that one has only to buy the whole to make his fortune. Dealers, though overwhelmed by the kindness of friends, still desire a little further oppression. Mind and body are equally regarded by those considerate philanthropists. Knowledge is infused at six lessons. Health is condensed into one

potent pill. Preserved turtle is warranted lighter than panada. Razor-strops are offered which turn the ancient scourge of manhood into pleasure. *Corsages* await the fair sex, sitting closer than the native skin. One artist supplies tallow candles, eclipsing the brightness of wax :—Another keeps honey of a flavour that mocks Hyinettus :—A third boasts of brawn which dissolves on the palate like a dream. Glenlivet struggles with Glenlivet in strength and flavour :—coal defies coal for brilliancy and warmth. We have cheeses richer than marrow,—pullets delicate as ortolans,—quintessence of ratafia, pale brandies, and golden-coloured ales.

After amusing myself with a walk through the streets, which, though edifying to the mind, is but wet and dirty to the outward man, I feel a quiet pleasure in returning homewards, amidst the fogs and smoke of a closing winter's day, gradually brightened by the lamps which twinkle, like successive stars, through the gloom. On reaching my abode, how agreeably do I abandon myself to the comforts of the evening. With what an indolent satisfaction I pull off my damp shoes, and don my red morocco slippers, and prepare for a social and temperate meal. How soothing, after this is over, to stretch myself, in my easy chair, before the fire, and enjoy all the snugness and homefelt satisfaction of such a retreat. The amiable Cowper himself could not feel it more, however he might describe it better. I am a match for him at a *brown study*, and scarcely less inventive in speculating among the red cinders. Then do I give myself up to the art

and mystery of castle-building. What splendid systems do I form,—what mighty undertakings accomplish. The most intricate sciences yield to my skill. All mankind are benefited by my labours, or improved by my example. Acts of heroic beneficence, or generous devotion, are achieved. The highest honours are attained,—or more nobly despised. The mental edifice rises like an exhalation, and is completed in all its parts. But in this the very summit and exaltation of my powers, I am interrupted by my little nephew handing me a cup of tea; and the urchin avers, in spite of my remonstrances and indignant denial, that for the last half hour I have been as sound as a humming-top.

Amid these tranquil scenes the mind looks forward to the merry hours of Christmas and the New Year. It revels in the delight of joyous parties, and social fire-sides, and cheerful bowls. Then come, in long array, visions of departed turkies, and slaughtered geese, and savoury minced pies; and all the sports and antics of that jovial time, by which we contrive to cheat the sullen hours, and urge the hobbling foot of winter away. Let formal souls affect to undervalue such things as trivial. For my part, I hold them to be both pleasant and wise.

To conclude, I now intimate in form to my disciples of this good city, that I am returned to reside amongst them; and if any laxity of morals or manners have crept in during my absence, I request that it may be straightway amended.

LXX. DUDDINGSTON LOCH.

Vides, ut alt⁴ stet nive candidum
 Soracte, nec jam sustineant onus
 Sylvæ laborantes, geluque
 Flumina constiterint acuto ?

HOR.

Look up to Pentland's towerin' tap
 Buried beneath great wreaths o' snaw ;
 'Tween ilka cleugh, and scawr, and slap,
 As high as ony Roman wa'.

ALLAN RAMSAY.

THESE several days past have brought upon us a biting frost, which has covered with ice all the pools and waters around our city. This has transformed our beautiful suburban lake, called Duddingston Loch, into a hardened mirror, and made it the scene of divers winter jollities.

"Uncle," exclaimed a young voice, awakening me out of my morning slumbers, "this is Saturday, and we have the play at the High School—and you promised to take me out to see the Skating Club at Duddingston Loch—and they are to be there to-day—and it will be famous fun :"—"Well, you little jackanapes, and though all this were true, what was the use of disturbing me so early?—Get you gone, and let me have out my morning's nap."

—“ But, uncle, it’s near eight o’clock, and if we do
“ not go soon, the club will be away—and the morn-
“ ing is so fine, and”—“ Pshaw, you little imp!—well,
“ go and tell John to bring my shaving water.”

After all, the urchin, even when bent on sport, has a degree of reason and discretion about him, which is remarkable enough.

Breakfast was accordingly despatched betimes ; and immediately afterwards we proceeded to fortify with great-coats, neckcloths, and all the comforts of fleecy hosiery ; and set forth on our walk. Although the air was intensely cold, the wind was moderate, and the sun shone with all the brightness of June.

When the body is in health, and sufficiently vigorous to take exercise, there is no state of the atmosphere more bracing and exhilarating than a frosty morning. On we paced over the flinty earth,—the crisp fragments of ice crackling beneath our feet,—till we gained the extremity of our southern suburbs. The smoke, as usually happens in such weather, had settled down in a lurid mass over the town, amidst which the sun fought and struggled ;—sometimes darting a feeble intermittent glance ;—sometimes wading through the dense medium rayless as the moon. But when once we had got beyond the streets, we emerged into the radiance of an Italian sky ; and saw the distant fields, and the majesty of old Arthur’s hill, covered with a veil of glistening snow.

When fairly off the stones, there are few walks around our city (numerous and fine as these are) more beautiful than this to Duddingston. After passing

St Leonard's, the classic domicile of Jeanie Deans, you strike at once upon the steep side of the overhanging hill, and wind around the base of noble basaltic columns, commanding the prospect of a rich distant country. On this day, the walk was covered with a stream of pedestrians setting towards the lake. Men and boys, with their skates under their arms :—Ladies in smart attire, escorted by their husbands, brothers, or lovers :—crowds of children, their eyes brightened with gaiety, and their cheeks blooming in the frosty air :—Plodding citizens, with their families, who had thrown off the soil and drudgery of the week, to refresh their lungs with the bracing breeze, and their eyes with a peep at nature :—all these blending together, flowed onwards to the point of attraction.

Hapless and ill-starred were the few who came in the opposite direction, and met this current in its strength. The stagnation was still farther increased at the turnstiles, which here and there intersect the path. At one of these we encountered a poor woman, as she brought to town a load of linen from the washing. She made many excuses for the large space she occupied, when so little was to spare ; and some of the passengers were thoughtless enough to grumble at the interruption :—“ Why, my good woman,” said I, “ for aught I see, the case between us stands thus. “ You are employed in doing something :—We in “ doing nothing. Which has the best title to complain ?”

But now, rounding the hill to the south, we came

in sight of the noble expanse of solid water, along whose surface myriads of creatures were gliding, "upward and downward, thwarting and convolved," like insects in the solar beam. Meantime the ear was struck with a dull continuous roar, like the noise of distant thunder, which arose from the innumerable sharp-edged irons ploughing the glassy surface. The same cause had so scored the ice, in every direction, that it appeared as if whitened by a slight snow. In various places tents were pitched, gay with coloured streamers, where all refreshments were supplied to the tired, the hungry, and the thirsty :—While, on the bold overhanging rock, at the north-east corner of the lake, a band of military music awakened the echoes with their rich harmonies, which died along the adjoining woods. I know not that there exists, so near any metropolis on the globe, a scene at once so beautiful and so sequestered, as this lake, at ordinary seasons. The high broad shoulder of Arthur's Seat, intrudes so completely between, as to hide all view of the city :—While the overhanging rocks,—the quiet village and spire jutting into the lake,—the woods which fringe it to the east,—and the southern upland, terminating in the storied towers of Craigmillar, and the distant outline of the Pentland hills ;—all these form a scene of solitary repose which might lead you to think yourself a hundred miles from the haunts of men.

Such, however, was not the character and aspect of the scene to-day. The genius of population presided in all his unchecked fecundity. We ventured on the

lake, and soon found ourselves in the midst of the moving scene. Cautious, however, and uncertain was our step, and slow our progress ;—now recovering from a half slip ;—now avoiding the ill-frozen springs ;—now shrinking from the collision of a skater, who whizzed past us like a whirlwind.

There were performers in this art of all ranks, sizes, and merits. For the first-rates, a corner was set apart, into which there was no intrusion of the profane,—the fence being a circle of admiring spectators. Here these magnates performed their evolutions, singly or in groups, and exhibited all the varieties of attitude and motion which belong to their difficult art, with an ease and grace which appeared like magic.

Other groups presented themselves, which, if less elegant, were more merry. Here a huge spread-eagle, of six feet high, sawed the air with out-stretched arms, his great-coat flowing like a meteor behind :—there a squat citizen laboured hopelessly at *outside* :—here two opposite racers came in contact, and embraced each other with rueful ill-will, performing an involuntary gyro before they could dissolve their union :—there a novice incautiously advancing his feet before his head, came plump upon the ice, and continued the progress on his nether end.

Nor were the sports confined to such ambitious performers. Slides of portentous longitude were made for those who could not afford skates. Here, the young apprentice, the booted postboy, the raw recruit, the pulverulent baker, followed each other in continuous line ; till some unlucky wight happening to stumble,

numbers without number, head over heel, and heel over head, swelled the mountain of slain. There they lay rolling, a many-coloured mass, some roaring, some fighting, some laughing ;—while shouts of merriment burst from the surrounding spectators. The prostrate heroes, however, like Mr Bayes's dead men, speedily arose, and resumed their living labours.

Apart, and in a secret nook retired, were posted the sober and steady *Curlers*. This sport may be described to the uninitiated as a species of bowling, played with polished stones on the ice ; and if eager interest in the players can vouch for the merits of a game, this seems entitled to an especial pre-eminence. It was not unamusing to see grave clergymen, and plump elderly citizens,—their hats off,—their waist-coats unbuttoned,—each armed with a little brush,—sweeping the ice,—bawling to their friends,—contorting their bodies after every movement of the stone,—and shouting with exultation at a successful hit :—in short, as noisy and happy as schoolboys.

As we limped along the lake, another form of pastime crossed our way. This was no other than the classic throne of winter described by Cowper—“ A sliding car indebted to no wheels,”—in prosaic language a *Traineau*,—which swept past, crowded with ladies, decorated with gaudy colours, and drawn and pushed on by skaters. The fair and blooming burden, however, who filled this vehicle, resembled in nothing the grisly phantom imagined by the poet.

Meantime the light was fading, and the air be-

ginning to grow chill. The sun had sunk in a blaze of frosty red. Multitudes were seen tying up their skates, crippling homewards on benumbed feet, or flocking to the booths for refreshment. My youthful companion was scarcely yet satiated with gazing; but I thought it prudent not to exceed; so, after tasting a little of the good cheer, we joined the departing crowds, and returned towards the city.

LXXI. MEDITATION ON THE ALMANACK.

Singula de nobis anni prædantur euntes.

HOR.

Years following years, steal something every day;
At last they steal us from ourselves away.

POPE.

As I was passing along the streets, a few days ago, I heard a young fellow bawling in a voice which might have borne its part in the concert of Hogarth's *Enraged Musician*;—"New Almanacks;—" "Aberdeen Almanacks;—" "Belfast Almanacks, for "this present ensuing year, which is to come." How the sages and prophesiers of the above two distinguished cities have got into such credit with their countrymen, I never could learn:—but the fact is certain, that their vaticinations about the weather, the planetary influences on the health, and other matters of like concernment, are held to be infallible:—So that, if you will but trust to their guidance, you may

save yourself the cost of a greatcoat, and a doctor, all the year round.

Although this compendium of useful knowledge was offered to me by the strong-lung'd orator I have mentioned, for the easy charge of a penny ;—with the additional persuasive,—“ And your honour sees, besides, there is a picture of the sun and moon, and “ tables of feasts and fasts, and what not ;”—I had the obduracy to refuse it. The circumstance however reminded me, that I wanted an annual monitor of the same name, and of higher price,—though far humbler pretensions ;—inasmuch as it only professes to record the things of this world, as they presently exist. I have always considered the stated recurrence of the Almanack, at the close of the year, as among the most striking pictures of human life, in all its bustle, and all its instability :—

It turns, submitted to our view, turns round,
With all its generations.

We there behold the busy haunts of man thronged with occupants. We find those common rules, and that minute information, which help us through the business of life. The whole year lies before us,—every day having its peculiar appropriation. All the functions and callings necessary for carrying on the affairs of the world are recorded ; and those who fill them (I say it without meaning a conceit), are found at their *posts*. Nothing, in short, can more completely realize a *map of the present*.

By a reflex operation, it becomes as striking a memorial of the past. When you compare it with its

brother of the former year, how many whose names figured in the one, have disappeared from the other. And if (as I, and other wise men, do) you store up these little annual remembrancers, and will only look back for ten or a dozen revolutions of our planet round the sun,—you find yourself in another world. Ensigns who appear there have now become colonels ;—barristers, judges ;—bank clerks, cashiers and directors ;—and the dapper bowing shop-boy, a solemn magistrate, with a velvet gown. Some have been displaced by their foes, and others by their friends. Some have risen by patronage, some by merit, and some by good luck. Some have been blown off in the shifting squalls of politics :—others have perished under the pruning-knife of reform. Some have been removed for too little honesty, and others for too much. Whilst, amidst these minor casualties, thousands have yielded to that inevitable law which terminates alike the man and his labours.

But, although the prevailing feature of an Almanack be change, there is a certain class of readers to whom it conveys an unpleasant sense of permanency. The expectant of office,—the reversionary of a fat benefice,—beholds, year after year, the name of the old crazy incumbent filling its allotted niche, in characters durable as Corinthian brass. He lives, and lives on, in very spite to his longing successor. In vain do fevers rage, and epidemics descend. In vain gout racks, and colic wrings, and watery catarrhs oppress. In vain apoplexies assault from above, and dysenteries mine from below. In vain does the an-

cient epicure choke upon a fish-bone, or tumble from his broken-winded pad. Well or ailing, still he hangs together; while the hungry expectant feels himself growing old apace;—sees the period of possession delayed till it comes too late for enjoyment;—nay, even runs a chance of being called away himself before his remorseless anticipator.

There is still another student of the Almanack, to whom it communicates a mixed feeling of change and durability. If he chance to fill a place in one of those lists which mark out a permanent and numerous profession, he sees himself there fixed through many a recurring year, yet gradually ascending the ladder towards that painful pre-eminence which designates the seniors of the brotherhood. He feels himself, as it were, in the progress of being elbowed out of the world by a younger generation, far more pert and irreverent than in former days. The distasteful secret of his age is forced upon himself, and revealed to others, by the infallible rule of addition:—And he would fain arrest the record as it stands, and keep himself young, on the approved principle which insures good weather, by plugging up the mercury at *settled fair*.

Among the minor merits of an Almanack, it is impossible to overlook the assistance which it gives towards promoting general conversation; insomuch that it has been justly said that a man well read in its columns may, on that strength alone, bear his part in any society in the kingdom. There are, moreover, for those who wish to dive a little deeper, besides

this great reservoir of knowledge, sundry smaller repositories, which are devoted to some branch or department. We have the *Seaman's Almanack*, the *Trader's Almanack*, the *Sportsman's Almanack*:—and, in the progress of improvement, I doubt not that we shall one day see the *Cockfighter's Manual*, the *Coach-driver's Calendar*, and the *Boxer's Vade Mecum*. All the world is acquainted with the *Almanac des Gourmands* of our polite neighbours, wherein the noble science of cookery is philosophised, and the learned epicure is enabled to *eat round the year* with becoming taste and propriety. It was, at one time, in agitation, as I understand, among the fair sex, to establish a *Lady's Almanack*, in whose columns might be recorded not merely the change of fashions, the invention of patterns, new figures for dances, and other such important matters; but also the *debut* of young beauties,—the conquests achieved,—and the marriages which closed the winter campaign. There was to be an obituary for lapdogs, gentlemen who died for love, and other the like striking casualties. In short, all was nearly arranged; when it occurred that an awkward certainty would thus be given to dates, which might be inconvenient for such ladies as preferred being *of no particular age*. On full consideration, therefore, it was unanimously resolved that the thing would never do.

But (to be serious) there is no impression which the Almanack conveys more strongly than the prosperous height and mighty establishments of our native land. In this little book they are exhibited in

all their extent and ramifications. This small island, placed in a northern latitude, amidst stormy seas, on the outskirts of Europe;—an island proverbial among the polite nations of antiquity for all that was barbarous and forlorn:—this island, by the genius and valour of her sons, hath extended her sway over the fairest and remotest regions of the globe, and made her influence be felt from the equator to the poles. In the record now before us, we behold establishments in every region of the habitable world. An empire in the East, more extensive than that at home; conferring on a mild but ignorant people the blessings of civility and just laws:—a rising colony on a southern continent, which promises to diffuse over that mighty waste at once population and refinement:—settlements in Africa for the express purpose of rescuing that injured region from the evils of barbarism, and abolishing a traffic which is the opprobrium of civilized man:—a spacious portion of America, both insular and continental, still our fellow subjects:—and leading our contemplation onwards to an adjacent great and prosperous Community, who, though now independent of our sway, must ever regard us as the parents of her language, her religion, her knowledge, and her liberty. Such is the position of Great Britain when we look abroad upon the world.

Turning our eyes on her establishments at home, the prospect is not less remarkable. When we behold the mighty institutions for war and peace:—the brilliant armies;—the noble navies;—the harbours, docks, and arsenals;—the stately hierarchy;—

the foundations for learning and charity ;—the extensive administration of civil offices belonging to the government, revenue, and laws ;—the numerous and splendid peerage ;—the wealthy, honourable, and intelligent gentry ;—the merchants like princes :—when we consider the immense resources which all these things display ;—the activity, talent, and method, by which they are carried on :—When we contemplate this high and palmy state of national glory ; and think from what small beginnings it has arisen, and in what it may one day end ;—the prospect may well fill us with triumph, and with fear.

With triumph, because all this has been achieved (as much as any thing in this world can be achieved) by our own exertions and virtues. We have prospered above other nations, because we have excelled them in freedom, in order, in energy, in knowledge, in morals, and in religion. But there is also room for fear. There is the terrible instability of human things ;—the rivalry of other nations ;—the risk of degeneracy among ourselves. The very height of our elevation would aggravate the shock and ruin of our fall. This is a catastrophe which, I sincerely believe, would be one of the greatest calamities that could afflict the civilized world.

Let us hope, however, that our prosperity may be insured by the continuance of our virtue. Among the various particulars disclosed by this little book, it bears a noble testimony to the active beneficence of our people, in the numerous institutions there recorded, where the only reward is the conscious-

ness of doing good ;—where time, and labour, and money are freely given, to remedy the greatest evils of our nature, ignorance, vice, want, and disease. Let us hope that such works may cover many sins ; and rise up as silent intercessors in our behalf, with that Power in whose hands are the issues of life, and the fate of nations.

While I was musing on these things, and turning over the leaves of the new Almanack, on the last night of the year, I dropt into a doze ; when Fancy, personifying the various objects of my contemplation, I suddenly found myself amidst the whirl and engagement of life. Men of war, and men of peace, thronged around me, all pressing towards their different ends, and frequently jostling each other pretty rudely in the passage. Some were in gowns, some in swords, and some in fustian sleeves. Peers and peeresses swept by in their courtly robes ;—judges were delivering the law ;—and merchants writing at their desks. I was stunned by the rattle of coaches,—the bumping of sedan chairs,—the winding of post-horns,—the hissing of steam-boats,—the lumbering of waggons,—and all the heterogeneous din of the passing day. Casting my eyes into the air, I beheld a figure floating towards me on expanded wings ; but so far turned in perspective that I could discern his onward progress. While he advanced, the various objects of the earth seemed hastening to meet him, and were gradually lost in the oblivious gulf beyond. He was distinguished by the scythe and hour-

glass; but instead of the antique naked figure, with flowing beard, as he is usually represented, he was fully clothed; yet changed his garb so often that you could hardly distinguish one till he had put on another. First he wore the trunk hose, and slashed doublet of good Queen Bess: Anon he assumed the sanctified look, steeple hat, and starched bands of a puritan: Then he was a gay dashing cavalier, with falling ruff, and cap and feather: He next flourished in the honours of a full-bottomed wig: Hence he passed into the laced coat, and nicely powdered head, of the bygone age: And, lastly, exhibited the slovenly pantaloons, and cropped pate, of the present undignified generation. Besides the scythe and hour-glass, he held in his hand a little book, bound in red, which he only carried for a short but stated period; and then dropped it, and took up another in its room. These seemed to serve, like mile-stones, to measure his progress. When he opened this little book, I perceived that, instead of leaves, it contained only a small mirror which reflected an image of himself. The figure now floated above my head. I heard the rushing of his mighty wings. As I gazed, the sudden sound of a bell made me start. It was the clock striking Twelve. And I awakened in another year.

LXXII. HOGMANAY—THE LAST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.

—— Age ; libertate Decembri,
(Quando ita Majores voluerunt) utere.

HOR.

MY sober readers will conclude that, after the short preliminary slumber recorded in my last paper, which was ended by the solemn chime of midnight, I went quietly to bed, to enjoy a more durable repose. This supposition, however, though natural enough, would be very wide of the truth. But, in order to explain a discrepancy apparently so little consonant to my habits of regular living, I must premise a few particulars.

All our European nations of the West, both ancient and modern, have distinguished the closing of the year by observances of a festive and joyous character. Indeed, the sternness of that pinching season seems to excuse a degree of pastime and good cheer, which may soften the inclemency of the air, and brighten the wintry sky. Accordingly, the week which joins Christmas to the new-year has long been known, with us in Scotland, by the name of the *Daft Days*, and consecrated to social mirth. This spirit rises to its *acmé* on the last night of the old-year,—or rather the first morning of the new: And the multitude then indulges in certain joyous *Saturnalia*, more resem-

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bling the extravagancies of the Romish carnival, than the usual sobriety of Presbyterian manners.

This concluding day of the year is known to us Caledonians by the name of HOGMANAY; and the reader who desires to be acquainted with all the legendary lore belonging to the term,—etymological, historical, or romantic,—will find ample satisfaction in the Dictionary of our learned countryman Dr Jamieson. The peculiar observances used in Scotland he considers as remains of the antics performed by the *Abbot of Unreason*;—and some he even traces back to the ceremonies of the Druids. Among these, the first which breaks out, towards the close of the year, is that of troops of little urchins, who glide about the streets after nightfall, under the name of *Guisards*; with dingy white shirts thrown over their upper clothing, and hideous masks called *fause faces*. They descend into our sunk areas; and troll forth, to a plaintive and tuneless chaunt, the following moral distich, as an incitement to liberality:—

Hogmanay!
Trollollay!
Gi' us o' your white bread, and nane o' your gray.
Rise up, goodwife, and be na *sweer* *
To welcome in the merry new year;
The day will come when ye'll be dead,
And neither miss your meal nor bread.

On this closing night of the annual round, our streets, till the hour of twelve, exhibit their usual quiet appearance:—but the moment that the clock

* Unwilling, grudging, stingy.

strikes, out rush, from innumerable holes and crannies, swarms of people (who had assembled, according to their own phrase, *to drink in the new year*), with kettles, containing *het* or *hot pint*,—a sort of caudle made of spirits, milk, and sugar,—with which they ply each other, and all passers-by, to drink a GOOD NEW YEAR. Amidst their gambols, they usually preserve perfect good humour, and peaceable conduct ;—though, to this encomium some sad exceptions have occurred, in the annals of our city.

With these prefatory explanations, I now return to the point of time when I awakened from my doze, and found myself suddenly launched into another year. In furtherance of my desire to observe human nature under all its varieties, I had resolved to issue forth myself, and contemplate the nocturnal scene in its actual performance. This resolution, when made known to the family (who were all sitting up, at a little moderate festivity, awaiting the advent of the New Year), occasioned sore dismay to my worthy sister, and considerable amazement throughout the household. Their looks indeed plainly expressed a doubt whether their master was sane or sober.—“ Dear brother,” cried Judith, “ are you raving ?—Did ever such a fancy enter mortal head ?”—“ I hope not, Judith ;—and then I shall have the glory of being original.”—“ But you will get yourself murdered. All the blackguards in town are out to-night ;—thieves, robbers, cut-throats !”—“ Glad to hear it, sister :—The very company I wish to meet.”—“ O, brother ! how can you talk so ? You will never get home in life.”—“ I believe,

Judith, if I run any risk, it is that of being killed with kindness ; but against this also I will be on my guard.”—“ Do, then, take John with you. You will be some protection to one another.”—“ Nay, sister :—I have a right to expose my own head to be broken ;—but not another man’s :—So I will e’en go alone.”—Old Grizel, the housekeeper, who had listened in grave wonder to this conference, now turned away in despair, muttering—“ Hech sirs ! How he’s left to himsell !—Na, the man’s clean dementit.”

Muffling myself up, then, in the shabbiest great-coat I could find, out I sallied. A moon nearly full shone aloft, and the streets were as bright as day. Noises were rife in every quarter, as I proceeded through the New Town. My ulterior destination was the focus of turmoil, at the intersection of the North and South Bridges with the High Street ; but, early in my progress, I met groups of various numbers, ages, and sexes,—all equally loud and joyous. The first I encountered was pretty numerous, and consisted of both males and females. I was immediately surrounded, and greeted by the shaking of hands,—the offer of liquor, from kettles, stoups, and tea-pots,—and manifold wishes of a happy new year. The drink I parried by merely *kissing the cup* ; and returned their felicitations with great goodwill.—“ Od !” cried one, “ you’re a real fine auld chiel,—what’s your name ?”—“ My name ! I think, friend, you should tell me your’s first :—*gif gaf, ye ken*,”—“ Ou aye ! I’se do that willingly. My name’s Johnny Tamson, the heckler,—down bye yonder in

St Mary's Wynd,—next to Murdo Macnab, the auld-claes body :—Ye'll ken him :—just but-and-ben wi' him like.—He's a puir feckless bit wallydraigle o' a body,—but a hantle o' siller.—Weel,—I borrowed this coat frae him the night,—for mine's sair out at the elbows. Murdo had ta'en a drappie himsell, an' was as crouse as a twa-year-auld ; an' he wad fain hae joined wi' us at the *Outing* ; but his wife wadna let him ; and she said, says she"—But here the party, becoming impatient, hurried the speaker on :—So the saying of Murdo's wife (moral and appropriate as doubtless it was) must be for ever lost to posterity.

I soon after met a troop of boys, who, instead of offering me anything, begged of me " to mind the New Year." This I easily interpreted into a *periphrasis* for sixpence. I reproached them for their greediness, and said that I rather expected something from them. They replied that they had set out on that plan (which indeed divers empty jugs seemed to indicate) but having exhausted their stores, they now wanted a fresh supply.—" You young rogues," said I, " you have drunk it all yourselves."—And though I did not wholly credit their disclaimer of this charge, I ended by giving the desired sixpence.

The group which next approached had a more genteel appearance than any of the former. They announced themselves as a Marriage Party, who having finished their festivities within doors, and escorted the young couple to the bridegroom's house, were now on their way home. They were all neatly dressed, and attended by a band of music. I was accosted,

with the customary greeting by a very pretty girl, who told me she had been bride-maid, and who acted as spokeswoman of the party. She offered me a tumbler of liquor, after putting it to her own lips; and wished me a happy new year, and many returns. "My pretty dear," said I, "my *returns* must now be but few,—yet I trust they may be happy, according to your wishes. I wish the same to you, and your friends,—and have a better chance of my wishes being fulfilled. But in the mean time, as a good opportunity is not to be lost, I claim the privilege of the night, on those cherry lips, by way of a relish to the liquor."—With this proposal she modestly complied;—and after many shakings of the hand, they passed on.

The only exception which I saw to the good understanding among all, was in the case of one or two passengers, who being either unprepared for the salutation, or short in the temper, were so foolish as to get into a passion, and make resistance. This, however, led to nothing worse than a little hustling, groaning, and abuse, expressed in the choicest flowers of Billingsgate;—with, now and then, the grounds of an empty can launched after the recusant.

I soon after reached the intersection of the Bridges, where the multitude swarmed like ants on their hill-ock. Shouts of every discordant intonation rent the air. Throngs were pressing in all directions, giving and taking the accustomed beverage. I was assailed by many; but the very bustle favoured my evasion. In one corner, you beheld a battle-royal among a knot of combatants, too drunk to do each other much harm.

In another, there was a more select duel going on between two ; who, after tumbling together, and rolling a while in the kennel, were shoved by the bystanders into the mouth of a *close*, to settle their dispute at leisure. In a third spot, there was an attempt at a *Foursome Reel* amidst the press ;—and, in one sense, the *reeling* was no doubt unquestionable. While, here and there, a policeman, out of uniform, was known by his careless sauntering pace, and observant eye : and on any disturbance occurring, a few of these congregated in a moment, and conveyed, as if by magic, the delinquents into durance. Where, again, the heady liquor had done its work outright, and overcome both sense and motion, the patient was borne off, in a wheelbarrow, to sleep and the stomach-pump.

I was now nearly satiated with this night-piece :—So finding myself in the High Street at this unseasonable hour, and the moon still riding in her highest splendour, I bethought me of the prospect from the Castle Hill ; and pacing up the street, I gained that noble esplanade, where all was solitary as a desert ;—and contemplated the far-stretching landscape under the dim and softened light. The grey battlements of the fortress arose silvery and silent. The draw-bridge was up, and the sentinel on the inside ; so I remained the sole living unit on the scene. The noise of my footsteps was the only audible sound. After enjoying this solitude for some time, which the singularity of the hour, and the contrast with the tumult I had left, rendered not uninteresting, I re-crossed to the New Town, by the Earthen Mound, and reached my home in safety.

LXXIII. GOOD WISHES AT THE NEW YEAR.

Monstro quod ipse tibi possis dare.

Juv.

IT has long been the practice of periodical instructors of their countrymen, to make their salute at the beginning of a new year, and to congratulate their readers and themselves on the agreeable intercourse which has subsisted between them, throughout the preceding annual revolution. This duty I perform with much good will, as I cannot but flatter myself that my studies have been attended with some benefit, as well as pleasure, to both parties. For myself, I can truly say that they have afforded me an agreeable engagement; and have also given birth to a feeling of cordiality towards my disciples; which together form one of the pleasantest frames of mind imaginable. That cordiality is, I hope, in some degree mutual;—as my little sheets may have now and then filled up a vacant hour innocently or agreeably, and may even have left traces of a more lasting improvement. In the view of continuing this good understanding, I now proceed to offer to my readers the wishes of the season. Those wishes shall be such as I think they may safely form for their friends and themselves:—and as my subject will involve the most ordinary reflections, and turn out, I fear, little better than a lay-sermon; I must claim the privilege of being as dull as if I had graduated Doctor of Divinity.

The first wish which I shall form for my disciples is **HEALTH OF MIND**. In this, I include not merely exemption from that most awful visitation of Providence, which untunes the exquisite structure of the soul, and unsettles Reason on her throne;—but a good conscience, cheerful spirits, and moderate expectations. Upon all these, except the last, I anticipate little difference of opinion; but there are who allege, that a certain extravagance of views is the source of all improvement, and by no means unfavourable to happiness. “Perish the lore that deadens young desire,” says the poet; and the maxim I am far from contesting, if guarded by this *salvo*, that the desire be somewhat under the discipline of prudence. But so apt are sanguine hopes to exceed all reasonable probability,—so many are the cross accidents of this world,—and so bitter the pangs of disappointment; that, on the average of life, it is better to pitch our expectations so low as may leave a fair chance of their being fulfilled.

There are no doubt men of such irrepressible buoyancy of temper, that, after every failure, you see them rebound with fresh elasticity; and as each successive project is demolished, begin to build another on its ruins. This, in things of small moment, is certainly a happy disposition. But in matters which concern our fortune and reputation,—the welfare of ourselves and our families,—the hazards become too great; and frequent failures end in producing misery at last,—aggravated tenfold when others must share it.

The love of projects has sometimes the prudence to restrain itself from action, and to expand only in contemplation. This forms a habit which is vulgarly called *Castle-building*, and which, in the indulgence, has been thought not unfavourable to virtuous sentiment. "No man," it has been said, "is in castle-building a villain." I will not dispute that the feelings thus awakened are commonly allied to virtue; and are, in the exercise, extremely pleasing; yet it may be doubted whether a habit of this kind be favourable either to virtue or happiness. It is a habit incident to youth, and to warm and amiable feelings; and is therefore one against which the young and susceptible require to be cautioned. It is not the healthful aliment of the soul, but a species of intoxication, which evaporates in thought, and renders distasteful the actual duties of life. Indeed, when a visionary of this kind attempts to realize his contemplations, he finds the aspects of truth so different from the pictures which he has formed,—the obstacles to beneficence so numerous,—the means so few,—the agents so stubborn,—and the objects so undeserving; that he is apt to throw up the attempt in disgust or despair; and to cease doing any good, because he cannot do all. One of the most habitual and headlong votaries of this practice, was Rousseau. His life seems to have been little else than a long dream, peopled by the creations of his own fancy;—while he himself ever formed the centre and idol of the scene. This propensity, in his case, led neither to happiness nor to virtue. His peace was embittered by the cra-

vings of an insatiable vanity, which no wholesome gratification could appease; till at last, in its corruption, it took an unnatural delight in the promulgation of the lowest vices.

The next good wish which I shall form for my disciples, is HEALTH OF BODY;—a blessing never fully valued till its want has been felt. Even the instances which every day occur, of ailment in those around us, make but a faint impression. How many do we see “in all the madness of superfluous health,” throwing away this treasure with the most insane prodigality:—sacrificing it to vanity,—to appetite,—to mere unthinking folly. Even the more justifiable pursuits of business or ambition no wise man will permit to interfere with a due care of health; for if he consider the matter merely as an affair of calculation (laying his own personal suffering out of view), he will find, that the very interruption of his pursuits, or feebler application to them, occasioned by ill health, will more than balance any excess of labour bestowed in his years of vigour.

Nobody will suppose that, under this warning, I recommend an over anxious attention to health, or the frequent resort to artificial means for its preservation. Such habits generate a frame of mind which in itself constitutes the greatest misery. My notion is, that nature, left to herself, is the best physician; with her established counsellors Temperance and Exercise; and that our chief study should be to avoid any thing which may disturb her operations. The part of a wise man is seldom to think of his health at all; but to avoid

whatever may do it injury ; and as soon as he feels the actual approach of disease, to send for his physician. He thus at once avoids groundless fear and real danger. For it is not the less true for being said or sung by a disciple of Hippocrates, that

—— For want of timely aid
Thousands have died of medicable ills.

I may further remark, that ill health, when not very severe, is an evil which may be borne with composure, and is by no means incompatible with a reasonable share of happiness. I have known many instances (particularly in the softer sex) of bodily infirmities being endured with a fortitude, and even cheerfulness, which might have given an example to us boastful lords of the creation.

Next comes the point of **WORLDLY FORTUNE**, as to which my theory nearly corresponds with that which I have announced on the subject of Health,—namely, that its advantage consists less in the positive happiness which it yields, than in the warding off poverty and dependence, which are very considerable evils. All the physical enjoyment to be obtained from riches is within the reach of most of the educated classes :—That is, the supporting a family in the necessaries, conveniences, and some of the luxuries of life ; together with the means of study, society, and the sense of independence. All beyond this is mere show,—less to gratify the possessor by its use, than by the consciousness of possessing it,—the consideration which it brings,—and the pleasure of eclips-

sing others. What are splendid seats, houses, pictures, jewels, equipages, to the satisfaction of the possessor, except in the reflection that others admire them, and possess them not? They cannot be enjoyed except in succession:—They pall by use:—They are often relished by others more than by the owner himself. A stranger acquainted with the fine arts may have infinitely more pleasure in a picture, a statue, or a building, than the possessor. No doubt the latter has the satisfaction of saying, *It is mine*;—and then sets about persuading himself that he has a true taste for its beauties.

Not to speak at present of the noblest value of riches,—the power of doing good;—I am ready to allow that they are a source of enjoyment in the very occupation which they afford. The acquisition of a fortune (which is the great business of life, and the mainspring of the social union):—its management after being acquired:—its judicious expenditure:—all these create a constant occupation to the mind,—and generally an agreeable occupation,—which it is fair to take into view in considering the advantages of wealth.

On the other hand, among the educated classes of life, poverty,—and still more a change of circumstances from better to worse,—are great evils, and to be guarded against by every honest endeavour. If to these be added debt or dependence, the suffering, in an honourable mind, rises to the severest anguish:—And this evil is the greater, that such a condition, as it becomes less painful to the feelings, becomes more

fatal to virtue. For it is a melancholy truth, that a man seldom gets through extreme pecuniary difficulties with unblemished honour. Even should he escape the temptation of trying to conceal or retrieve his embarrassments by improper means, he gradually loses the delicacy of high moral feeling, and bends his mind to compliances which his conscience cannot approve. But while one keeps out of debt, he may be independent if he please. It requires but a little self-denial. Let him adapt his expense to his income, and he is free. And unless a man do this, however large his fortune, he is more or less a slave.

On this subject, I would earnestly warn the young, who are often thrown upon life, little accustomed to the use of money; and, from mere ignorance and thoughtlessness, involve themselves in engagements which they cannot redeem. To minds of high-toned sensibility the humiliation of such a state has often driven to despair and self-destruction.

Poverty,—when there has been no change from better circumstances to worse,—and when the mind and habits have been inured to it from infancy,—is no serious evil. It is the permanent lot of the great majority of mankind;—of those who live by their manual labour. And I believe, if we could calculate the average amount of suffering from concern about worldly circumstances, in the different classes of society, we should find it smaller, in proportion to their numbers, among this class than among any other.

In short, my whole doctrine on the present subject, shortly summed up, is this;—That few things

are more to be desired than an independent competency ;—few things less than exorbitant riches.

The last good wish which I shall offer to my readers, is expressed in one word, **OCCUPATION**. This is an ingredient so indispensable towards human happiness, that no situation of life, however prosperous, can give satisfaction without it ; and scarcely any is so abject as not to receive from it comfort and alleviation. Employment, however, to confer happiness, should neither be too light, nor too severe. There are instances where the tone of the mind has given way under anxious and unremitting labour,—particularly in persons of a sensitive and irritable temperament. The occupation which confers happiness must be neither distasteful nor excessive.

This instinctive craving for employment, when not supplied with proper objects, seeks its gratification in pursuits the most trifling or vicious. With the great mass of mankind it is not a matter of choice whether to labour or be idle. The demands of necessity,—the ambition of rising in the world,—the distinction conferred by professional eminence,—sufficiently enforce exertion in the various arts and callings of life. It is well when the profession happens to suit the inclination and capacity of the individual ; but even when this is not the case, habit will do much to reconcile original disagreement. Let all who murmur at an employment somewhat alien to their disposition recollect the far greater sufferings of idleness.

But of all occupations, there is none to be compared with the cultivation of the mind. This, however, I

counsel rather as the occasional engagement, than as the sole business of life. I believe that the calls of a profession contribute to happiness, even with men of the highest powers. We have seen splendid instances, in our own time, where those calls were united with the greatest literary eminence. But, as a relaxation, the pursuit of knowledge is at once the most attainable, and the most various;—the most pleasing, and the most ready;—the most noble, and the most lasting engagement of the mind. To the busy it affords an agreeable relief;—but to those exempted from enforced labour, it is invaluable and indispensable. After a man, therefore, is tolerably easy in health and circumstances, let him, above all blessings, pray for the thirst of knowledge;—and the wish has this advantage over most others, that it is no sooner formed than gratified.

LXXIV. ART OF GIVING A DINNER.

Ut coeat par
Jungaturque pari, Brutum tibi, Septimumque,
Assumam.

HOR.

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—You receive this letter from one who has devoted much of his time to the good of society; and, in particular, to the improvement of an important branch of the social system—the ART OF GIVING A

DINNER. Your paper No. 38, wherein the mysteries of DINNER and SUPPER are so happily unfolded,—shows how much you are alive to the momentous nature of this subject, and gives me hopes of finding in you a zealous disciple. The art to which I allude, though so long practised, is yet but imperfectly understood ; and I am desirous of consigning to your valuable CABINET the result of my experience ; in the hope of advancing my favourite study towards that perfection which ought to be the aim and end of all great undertakings.

“ When Swift was invited to dinner by his friend Lord Bolingbroke,—and, as an inducement to accept, was shewn the dinner bill,—he replied,— ‘ A fig for ‘ your bill of fare ;—shew me your bill of company.’ This was thought a *bon mot* in the Attic days of Queen Anne, and may serve as a text for my discourse. I would by no means have your readers entertain a thought so disparaging to the facetious Dean, as to suppose him indifferent to the bill of fare. He doubtless knew, from experience, the merits of his noble friend’s culinary arrangements ; to which he thought this matter might be safely entrusted. But he meant to intimate how important an ingredient a well chosen party is, towards making up a pleasant dinner. This art of selection it has been my study to refine and methodize into a system.

“ But here I anticipate an objection, on the very threshold, from those versant in domestic cares,—founded on the difficulty of the art proposed. It is not so easy, they will allege, to form a good party, as a good

dinner ;—inasmuch as agreeable guests are more rare than agreeable meats and sauces. But, Mr Kéeper, if difficulty is to be urged to dissuade us from exertion; what important enterprise will ever be achieved? Pyramids have been erected, and continents traversed, and seas explored, by the persevering energy of man :—why then may there not be a reformation in dinner-parties? It is the glory of original genius to overcome difficulties which to common minds appear insurmountable.

“ There is, in the noble and useful science of Horse-racing, as I am told, (for no man can be master of every thing) a phrase called *Handicapping* ;—which I understand to express the art of so balancing and adapting weights, riders, saddles, ages, distances, and so forth, among the different steeds, as to make them a suitable match for each other, and insure a good race in the result. Now this phrase I make bold to borrow, and apply to my own invention, which I would call the art of *Handicapping* a dinner party;—so as, by adjusting the age, habits, connections, station, and talents of the guests, to ensure an entertainment, which may run on briskly but smoothly,—without crossing or jostling,—lagging or straining,—to the end.

“ Or to borrow our analogy from the very table before us. It is well known that to constitute a perfect *entrée*, there must be observed a certain coherence and harmony among the dishes,—so that fish may not interfere with fowl, or stew take the place of roast. How should we be shocked to see a syllabub responsive to a sirloin,—a cod’s head yoked with a mince-pye,—or a fri-

candau shouldering a plate of cherries? With what anguish should we contemplate a duckling unattended by its green pease,—or a fowl divorced from its friendly ham? In like manner, there must be a sort of adaptation or homogeneousness among the guests assembled,—so that the old may not be confounded with the young,—the high with the homely,—the rough with the refined. Nay, there often occur individuals, who, like an acid and an alkali, though separately pungent, are totally neutralized by a junction.

“In illustration of the above remarks, it is sufficient to call your notice to the ill-assorted, misarranged, and, as I may say, utterly dislocated dinner-parties which we daily see around us. At one table you behold a judge brimful of law, brought into contact with a captain of the sea, who absolutely spouts salt water. At another, a spinster of the most perpendicular propriety is subjected to the explosions of a boisterous miss. At a third, a fair one is placed side by side with her *quondam* faithless adorer. At a fourth, two party opponents glare, like meteors, against each other, from their adverse orbits. At a fifth, you are immersed in a cloud of dull dignitaries, enough to stupefy a whole hemisphere. Here, an amatory poet encounters the critic by whom he was worried. There a blue-stocking lady, overflowing with sentiment, is addressed by a matronly housewife on the scouring of blankets. Here a sprig of quality is grafted on a vulgar stock. There a votary of the highest mode is associated with persons *whom nobody knows*. These, and a thousand other enormities which occur

every day to mar the promise of a festive meeting, too sadly prove the truth of my complaints, and call for the most speedy and effectual remedies.

“ It is melancholy to observe the effect of such mal-practices, in the symposial arrangements of our good city ; and what results of mawkishness and stupidity are the consequence. The evil arises chiefly from two causes.

“ The first is, that the giving of dinners is, with most people, considered pretty much as an affair of debtor and creditor ; and those who are much in the world keep their *Books of Company* as regularly as merchants keep their *Company Books*. The origin, or *prima stamina*, of a dinner, may often, I imagine, be traced somewhat as follows. Mr Townly and his lady are lounging connubially, *tête à tête*, in the evening, over the fire. ‘ My dear,’ says the gentleman, ‘ I believe we must have a dinner.’—‘ Indeed, my dear, ‘ I believe we must,’ answers the lady ; ‘ we are in debt to all the world.’—‘ True,’ resumes Mr Townly, ‘ we dined with Lord B. and Mr C. and Sir George ‘ D.’—‘ No, my dear, we have not dined at Sir George’s, ‘ since they were here in February :—and indeed Lady ‘ D. did not ask us to her evening party, which was ‘ rather odd :—But then there is Mrs E. and Colonel ‘ F., and the girls were at Lady G.’s rout.’—‘ Pshaw ! ‘ who cares for routs ?—I wish we were well through ‘ all we owe dinners to.’—‘ I beg your pardon, Mr ‘ Townly—we must make some return to those who ‘ are civil. You will not let me give evening parties :— ‘ You always make such a work,—and such a fuss,—and

‘complain that the house is put out of order,—and
 ‘grudge your wine, and other trifles.’—‘Trifles, Mrs
 ‘Townly!—Why, your last foolish ball cost me better
 ‘than a hundred pounds,—besides damage to my
 ‘house and furniture. I might have *dined off* my
 ‘whole friends for less money.’—‘Indeed, Mr Townly,
 ‘my balls cost far less, the year round, than your din-
 ‘ners. The girls, poor things, are now come a certain
 ‘length, and ought to see a little of the world.’—‘Yes,
 ‘—a pretty sum they have stood me, first and last, with
 ‘their *accomplishments*, as you call them :—And, I’m
 ‘sure, if they don’t *go off* after all ——’ ‘We need
 ‘not talk of that now, Mr Townly :—the girls have
 ‘only had the advantages usual among other young
 ‘people :’—‘Well, well, my dear,—we’ll pass that over
 ‘for the present ;—but about this same dinner.—Let
 ‘me see—Whom else must we have?’—and so forth.
 Thus, Mr Keeper, the dinner is provided to discharge
 old scores ; and all principle of selection gives place to
 the equitable rule of payment for value received.

“Another difficulty in the way of arranging a
 dinner party is the labyrinth of engagements in which
 the *dining world* is involved during the high season.
 Hence it arises, that however comely and befitting
 your *projet* or *programme* of a company may look,
 when first put on paper ;—with whatever reach of
 thought, and nicety of adaptation, it may have been
 assorted ;—you find, from the numerous returns of
regret and *lamentation* which respond to your ad-
 vances, that half your intended guests have been
 preoccupied by earlier demands. *Ibi omnis effusus*

labor. Your finest efforts of selection have been baffled by blind chance; and you are reduced to the necessity of filling up your ranks from any quarter, to avoid the humiliation of an empty table.

“ In vain do you attempt a remedy for this evil; by extending more and more the period of invitation. In vain do you (in a just reliance on the durability of human life and its enjoyments) lengthen out your date to three, four, five, and six weeks. As one extends, so does another. Even the vulgar intrude themselves into the province of the elegant;—and, spin out as you may, the wife of a cheesemonger shall eclipse you by a whole fortnight. You are thus, at two months, as little sure of your guest as at two days. In short, Mr Keeper, there is no disguising the extent of this calamity. It puzzles even my skill. Anxious for the perfection of my system, however, I have thought of a project for the alleviation of the evil,—the outline whereof is all that I can now give you. It is the establishment of a *General Register House, or Office for Engagements* passing in the fashionable world; with books properly ruled and figured, titled, classified, and posted; which shall contain all the assemblies, daily or nightly, that take place during the *belle saison*. Of this office I propose that I shall myself be constituted sole keeper (with a suitable choice of clerks, runners, and assistants);—as a charge of such importance, trust, and delicacy, could with safety be committed to no inferior hands. In this register will be inserted (for reasonable fees) the whole engagements of a winter, under their proper heads, names,

dates, and places ;—with the individuals of whom each party is to consist. Thus, the *inviter* will have an opportunity of fixing his day, so as not to interfere with other arrangements ;—while the *invited* will have the happiness of assisting at several score more parties than they can at present accomplish. Then, sir, we must sometimes ask a worthy dull friend, whom we had as lief not see,—a person, as the French term it, *d'une aimable absence*. In such a case, we may, by help of the register, happen to stumble on a day when our aforesaid dull friend is pre-engaged,—and then lament our misfortune in losing his company. These, and a thousand other benefits of the proposed plan, will at once strike every intelligent reader. But its details must be reserved for a future communication.—Meantime I remain, your constant reader and admirer,

“ SYMPOSIUS.”

LXXV. ART OF GIVING A DINNER.

Sed non ut placidis coeant immitia, non ut
Serpentes avibus gementur, tigribus agni.

HOR.

THE letter from my correspondent Symposium on the art of choosing a dinner-party, has, as might have been expected, procured me several others. It is a subject indeed which comes so home to the business and bosoms of men,—and in which all have so of-

ten partaken to their loss or gain,—that every one thinks he has something to contribute, in the way of confirmation, explanation, or correction. Several of these communications I shall now lay before my readers.

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—Your correspondent SYMPOSIUS has treated an important branch of domestic economics in such a way as to leave some doubt whether he be in jest or in earnest. Without settling this point, it seems to me that he has thrown out several hints, which are well worthy of attention to those who study the art of *Sçavoir vivre*,—which, in its best sense, may be rendered, the art of *agreeable society*. In this view, it is a subject worthy of being treated with perfect seriousness; and several errors in common practice may be pointed out, besides those touched on by your correspondent. Permit me to mention one, which, though not very common, is to be avoided ;—I mean that of inviting some individual of supposed brilliant parts, by way of a *lion*, to entertain the company. This is a proceeding which seldom answers any good end :—and that for two reasons. First, because there are many who pass for mighty clever fellows with themselves, and their own small circle of admirers, who are found only pert and insipid before a larger audience. As Boileau says, ‘*Tel brille au second rang, que s’eclipse au premier.*’ Your professed second-rate wag is one of the most insufferable of all animals, and should never be allowed to leave his

own dunghill. In the next place,—even where you obtain such a rarity as a person qualified to fill up the whole conversation, this soon becomes fatiguing to the rest, who are condemned to silence. Conversation should not be a despotism, where one predominates ; but a free government, where all have a voice, though doubtless in different shares. It has been remarked that the perfection of comic dialogue is not that which sparkles with constant flashes of wit, but that which preserves the equable tone of polite unaffected conversation ; and on this principle, the dialogue of Vanburgh has been preferred to that of Congreve. It is so of society in common life. That is the pleasantest conversation which leaves a general agreeable impression, without fixing on the memory brilliant thoughts, and epigrammatic sentences.—I am, Sir, your, &c.

“ MODERATUS.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—Among the evils incident to social meetings, your correspondent Symposius has forgot to mention the crying calamity of being exposed to gentlemen of an argumentative turn. I happened to suffer under this visitation a few days ago, at a friend's house, where I was invited to dinner. The disputatious pair were seated directly opposite to each other, near the middle of the table ; and began by a small tiff on the mode of dressing lobster-soup. However, while the ladies remained, they were prevented from proceeding to extremities,—partly by the

general noise,—and partly by the intervention between them of a large silver *plateau*,—round whose flanks they could only push out a few light skirmishers, as a prelude to the serious onset. But the moment that the ladies withdrew, it seemed like the clearing of decks for an engagement. To it they went pell-mell, and soon silenced the whole table. In vain did our host attempt an occasional diversion, by starting a new topic. Every thing came alike to them:—war or commerce, —theology or cock-fighting,—poetry, pharmacy, or wheel-carriages. On all subjects they took different sides, and were equally eager and copious:—nay, I even thought that a new topic only gave a fresh stimulus to the instinct, and set them off with increased alacrity. In short, sir, there seemed to be no end of it. So, after yawning,—and sipping our wine,—and fidgeting backwards and forwards on our chairs,—till we could endure no more;—we broke in upon a desperate conflict between the *long* and *short Annuities*, and made a general movement to the drawing-room. The combatants followed with much reluctance, battling it, step by step, as they ascended the stair-case;—and, as soon as they reached the drawing-room, retreated to a window, where they might fight the matter out without interruption. The further progress of the warfare I cannot detail, as I soon after took my departure.

“Your correspondent has compared certain persons to an acid and an alkali, which, though they have spirit separately, become insipid by a junction. But there are other chemical, as well as moral agents, which

are quiescent when asunder, but cannot meet without an explosion.—I am, Sir, &c.

“SIMON PEACEFUL.”

“TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“MR KEEPER,—Your correspondent Symposius does well to reprehend the strange irregularities sometimes committed in inviting persons of fashion into improper company. I dined the other day with a friend, who, though not of the first grade of *ton*, is really a passable enough person in his way: and being a distant relation, I could not well refuse. Judge of my feelings, Sir, when I found myself among a set of persons utterly *Tramontane*;—absolute *Bourgeoisie*, Sir, believe me. With infinite difficulty I got over the dinner; and pretending an engagement, came away immediately after. But, Sir, the evil does not end here. Those persons whom I saw at table have the effrontery to renew our acquaintance whenever we meet;—salute me in the most fashionable promenades;—and, at public places, almost shake their heads off with bowing and nodding at me, from a distance. I affect not to recognise, and look all different ways:—but such, Sir, is the pertinacity of those creatures, that it is sometimes impossible to escape them:—and then my genteel acquaintance exclaim,—‘Bless me! who is your friend?—how came you to know such people?’—An evil so flagrant, Mr Keeper, really requires the correction of your pen; and I trust that your readers, on seeing these consequences, will be on their guard against the enormity of making such ill-assorted assemblages.—I am, Sir, &c.

“TIM. TIPTOP.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—They take in your paper at our club, and I see you talk of wrong invitations to dinner, and all that. For my part, the worst change that I know of is, that folks begrudge their wine so now-a-days, that they are fidgetting and fiddling to go up to tea, forsooth, before one has well had time for a bumper to the best in Christendom. For aught I see, we shall soon be all milk-sops and water-drinkers ; and then the French may conquer us when they will. Yours,

“ MICHAEL MAGNUM.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—The odd improper company one sometimes meets with is really wonderful. I was lately invited to a party where they had the grossness to talk against ladies using *red* the whole evening. Yours,

“ PRISCILLA CARMINE.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—I had the misfortune to find myself, the other day, among a party of young gentlemen, who either were, or fancied themselves to be, great adepts in the science of horse-flesh ;—including racing, hunting, training, &c. Accordingly, during the whole afternoon,—or at least as long as I had patience to stay, —not a word was uttered on any other subject ;—the language and the matter being equally above my comprehension. Now, Sir, I do not quarrel with this.

The conversation might be very edifying to those who understood it. All that I object to was the asking me to hear it.—Yours ever,

“ THOMAS PLAIN.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ MR KEEPER, SIR,—I perceive a letter lately published by you from one Mr Symposius (which, however, I take to be a feigned name, from finding none such in the Edinburgh and Leith Directory), justly reflecting on certain improprieties in the inviting, assembling, and assorting of parties at dinner. This subject, Sir, hath before attracted my attention, being convinced that sundry errors therein committed, call aloud for rectification and amendment. There is, indeed, in the present age, a lightness and frivolity which disinclines from the listening to staid and deliberate persons, who can communicate useful knowledge. When I am invited abroad, I commonly refresh my memory upon one or two points of inquiry, in the sole view of profiting others ; but (would you believe me, Sir) I sometimes fail to receive that patient and grateful attention which might be expected. I dined last week with my esteemed friend Sir Jacob Easy ; and before leaving home, looked into some manuscript notes which I have put down respecting Church-history, as well as divers secular topics, viz. the Herring Fishery, the Linen Trade, and so forth. No opportunity, however, was given me. The conversation turned wholly on frivolous matters. Nay, having drawn my chair near a young gen-

tleman after dinner,—and just begun to open some curious points touching the Impropriation of Tithes,—the jackanapes rose, and moved round to the other side of the table, where he sat whispering and tittering with another as giddy as himself. In short, Sir, if such things are not corrected, there is an end of all improving conversation,—of all respect for wisdom and experience, in the present age. Hoping your speedy attention to this evil, I remain, Sir, your very obedient servant,

“ SOLOMON SLUMBER, D.D.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.”

“ SIR,—Your correspondent Symposius has, I see, some slight notions of the *savoir vivre*; but he is far too short on the *dinner*, properly so called, and the shameful abuses one sees in that department. I was lately asked to two parties on the same day;—and after long balancing between *venison* and *grouse* at the one, and *turtle* and *woodcock* at the other;—the latter carried it. But, Sir, can you credit such barbarism?—The turtle was unattended by *iced punch*,—and the woodcocks were served up without the *trail*? Yours,

“ PHIL. NICETOOTH.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.”

“ DEAR MR KEEPER,—How can you give us so much stuff about odious dinner parties? I'm sure I wish there was not a dinner in the whole world.

When I go out with papa and mamma, I am obliged to sit stiff and still, whispering in a formal drawing-room;—then fixed down at a long dull dinner, where the men do nothing but talk about vintages, and swill and drink with each other;—and one is always seated next the stupidest people alive. Then our tedious drawing-room circle, by ourselves,—sipping cold tea,—and waiting impatiently till papa comes up stairs, to take us to an evening party. Then, indeed, all is changed.—We go and come as we please:—dance and chat with whom we like:—all in short is gaiety, splendour, and freedom. No, Mr Keeper,—there can be no indurable society under a hundred at least.—If you double that number, so much the better.—Yours,

“ SUSAN TRIPPIT.”

“ TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

“ SIR,—I happened to dine, some time ago, with Mr Tasty, who piques himself on the excellence of his wine. On the arrival of a fresh bottle of claret, after dinner, our host asked if it was not corked.—‘ O no, Sir,—not at all,—not that I am sensible of;—But I am no judge,’—answered one, and another, and another.—‘ Do, pray, gentlemen, be frank with me,’—said Mr Tasty:—then, turning to me, he begged my sincere opinion. Thus adjured, I could not help saying, that I thought the wine a little touched,—for in truth, Mr Keeper, it was as bitter as gall. One by one, all the company came into my sentiments, and the bottle was dis-

missed. Mr Tasty expressed himself infinitely obliged to me :—but, somehow or other, I have never had an invitation from him since. Can you account for this, Mr Keeper?—Yours,

“ RALPH SIMPLE.”

In answer to my friend Mr Simple, I must inform him, that it is the height of ill-breeding for a guest to have a more curious palate than his entertainer.

LXXVI. PLEASURES OF A BAD DAY.

*At quum tonantis annus hibernus Jovis
Imbres, nivesque comparat.*

HOR.

THE pleasure which we have in observing contrasts has long been noticed by those who examine into human nature, or address human feelings: nor is that pleasure ever so great as when we compare exterior, or past, or fictitious calamity, with present enjoyment felt by ourselves. This principle, it is well known, has been illustrated by Lucretius, in the prospect, from a safe retreat on shore, of ships toiling amidst the tempest. Virgil has told us that it is pleasant to remember past misfortunes. Our own poets, Thomson and Cowper, remark the sense of comfort which we feel in a snug warm dwelling, when contrasted with the wintry blast howling around its roof. And Armstrong has thus happily expressed the same sentiment :

O when the growling winds contend, and all
 The sounding forest fluctuates in the storm,
 To sink in warm repose, and hear the din
 Howl o'er the steady battlements, delights
 Above the luxury of vulgar sleep.

These authors have their praise :—But the palm of original discovery was reserved for the Keeper of the Cabinet, in unfolding to his admiring readers the PLEASURES OF A BAD DAY.

“ Dear me, Mr Keeper,” said a lady to me lately, “ was there ever such a day as Wednesday ?—Such a shocking odious rain, the whole twelve hours long ;—and then so terrible a wind too :—Never stirred abroad the whole day ;—and then not a soul could come near one ;—I was quite *accablée* with headach and *ennui* ;—was actually forced, (by way of passing the time,) to read two papers in the CABINET,—and go over all my invitations. Then I sat down to finish my silk purse ;—but one grows so stupid working,—and one’s thread breaks so often,—besides ruining the eyes :—In short, I never felt any thing so uncomfortable. Did not you, sir ?”—“ Why, madam, the day was certainly wet.”—“ Wet, do you call it ?—Why, it was a flood,—a perfect deluge. Did you ever see any thing so disagreeable ?”—“ I have seen many things more disagreeable. To me it was rather otherwise.”—“ Bless me,” said she, with a look of infinite surprise, “ what do you mean ?”

As an interruption occurred before I could satisfy the lady’s curiosity, I will now beg leave to answer her inquiry ; and mention some of the reasons for the

opposite impression which the day in question left on my mind, and on hers.

When I awaken in the morning, and hear the wind roaring in the chimney top, and the rain pelting in gusts against my window,—“This is well,”—say I,—congratulating myself on the prospect of a Bad Day. I then creep out of bed to the window; and, gazing forth, behold the heavens surcharged with heavy clouds,—the drops pouring down from the eaves,—and the streets shining with moisture.—“Better and better,” I add; “it is fairly set in.”—I descry one or two workmen hurrying betimes to their daily labour, with coats buttoned,—heads held down,—and hands in their breeches’ pockets.—“Poor souls,”—say I, sneaking back into bed,—“it is not, however, quite so well for them:”—And, while I gently sink into another slumber,—endeavour to feel as much compassion for them as I can.

After breakfast, I again look forth, and see an unbroken curtain shroud the welkin from side to side,—the drops dancing in the gutters,—and the deluge driving aslant before the blast. Here a lubbard scavenger sweeps out the overflowing kennels:—there a damsel, sorely bedraggled, picks her steps through a wilderness of mud:—at an adjoining corner, a hapless gentleman is engaged in conflict with his umbrella, which buffets him to and fro,—reversing the concave into the convex;—or perchance, taking an upward flight, leaves its gazing owner with the stick in his hand. Satisfied with this contemplation of the evils of humanity, I repair to my study;—stir

my fire into a rousing blaze ;—glance my eye with conscious pleasure round my library ;—draw in my elbow-chair ;—and throwing myself back, with outstretched limbs, set about determining how I am to pass the day.

Sometimes I plunge into the sweet maze of poesy. In a moment I find myself amid sunshine, and summer breezes, and quiet waters, and all the voluptuous serenity of a Southern climate ;—and enjoy this with double relish, when I contemplate the sad and surly atmosphere without. Sometimes I turn the historic page, and read the lessons of that stern philosophy which teaches by examples. I explore the crooked toils of policy ;—I listen to the debates of councils ;—I pursue the route of armies ;—I mingle in mighty battles ;—I attend the fugitive, the captive, the dying. I trace the rise and fall of individuals, and of nations. I mark the incessant struggles and agitations of men ;—their keen pursuits, their furious rivalries, their remorseless ambition ;—and ask myself, what availeth all this now ? I contrast this stir with my own tranquil seclusion ; and comfort myself with thinking, that if my case be insignificant, it is at least harmless and safe. Sometimes I follow the wanderer by land or sea, into strange countries, among savage people. I see nature under aspects different from what I ever saw ; and men varying from each other as much as the regions they inhabit. I faint under burning suns, or shiver amidst polar ice. I share the traveller's perils and escapes, his adventures and discoveries. I sympathize in the rude re-

pulses which he meets with,—the seasonable relief,—the unexpected kindness. And I readily bestow on him, like the amiable Cowper, my thanks and praise, that, with so much toil to himself, he has spread a feast for my repose. Sometimes I pierce into the thorny thicket of metaphysics;—pushing aside the boughs, and catching by the twigs, and leaping the ditches, and wading through the quagmires,—with closed eyes, and indefatigable arms;—till, after long warfare, I find myself just where I set out;—with little other benefit than the sharpened activity acquired in the conflict. Sometimes I take upon myself the task of active labour, and (as at this present writing) cull from the gathered stores of my CABINET, for the benefit of my readers and posterity.

It were inexcusable to omit the peculiar delight of sitting down to a good novel on a bad day. The interesting story, the glowing descriptions, the amusing characters, are all enhanced by the storm without,—the snugness within,—and the unbroken leisure for enjoyment. The poet Gray declares his idea of an Epicurean paradise, to be fulfilled in lounging on a sofa, and reading perpetual new romances of Marivaux or Crebillon. A fertile and mighty genius of our own day has put it in our power actually to realize this Elysium.

Nor am I the only member of the household who profits by the advent of a Bad Day. On such an occasion, you may discern, in my worthy sister's countenance during breakfast, a resolved and serious look, which indicates a soul intent on high designs.

This is an opportunity destined by her for despatch of business, and a thorough inspection and reform of the household, from the garret to the cellar. From this scrutiny, the only spot exempted is my study,—which I reserve as a sort of *city of refuge*, amidst the general storm of ablution that descends on the rest of the domicile. To attain this object, however, orders or injunctions would be a slight protection against the active housewifery of my sister and her handmaids:—so, to keep all safe, I man the fortress myself, and make a vigorous resistance against all intrusion. The rest of the house is abandoned to the invaders. The affusion from mops and pails within, almost emulates the deluge without. Floors and tables are vexed with scrubbing. Beds are taken down, and carpets folded up. No nook or cranny escapes the searching inquisition. Lurking decays are detected, and ancient impurities cleared out. Domestic utensils are considered. Some are found to be worn out,—others broken;—and orders for amendment are issued accordingly. Garments are scanned with a curious eye;—and if hole appear in stocking,—or small-clothes gape with hideous rent,—or loosened button be *wagging its sweet head*,—straightway the helping-hand is applied. If, in the domestic manufacture of luscious condiments,—marmalade or jelly,—aught hath mis-given,—now is the time for a thorough recoction. If liquor is to bottle,—this is a season free from interruption. Lumber is removed,—stores unpacked,—letters answered,—servants scolded,—accounts examined,—household-books posted up:—In short, a

thousand weighty matters, essential to the conduct of a well-ordered family, are despatched under favour of a Bad Day.

My little nephew, from such an event, derives less apparent benefit than the rest of the family. To an active and healthy boy, nothing can compensate the want of corporal locomotion. Various devices are fallen upon, to keep him quiet, by assigning new tasks, and rehearsing old ones: but after these are exhausted, the instinct breaks out in a restlessness and meddling, which my sister pronounces to be nearly akin to mischief. In vain do I represent this activity as flowing from the wise order of nature, and the source of all knowledge.—“A fig for your knowledge and “nonsense,” answers Judith, “the little *smatchett* has “broke my Nankin jar.”—She therefore endeavours to divert this nocent propensity, by setting him to work at some wheel of the domestic machinery. And, indeed, this labour of keeping him out of mischief (as my sister terms it) adds no inconsiderable *item* to her occupations on a Bad Day.

To all this it may be objected, that the pleasures I am describing are of a selfish nature; and that no one should derive satisfaction from the evils of his fellow-creatures. This, however, I consider as refining too much. The sentiment to which I have alluded is perhaps rather allied to benevolence, than opposed to it. At least, I can say for myself, that when I look forth on such a day, and see the less favoured of my species submitting with contentment, and even cheerfulness, to hardships under which I should heavily mur-

mur, I feel nothing but sympathy for their condition ; and ask myself what merit I possess, that should entitle me to so much ampler a share of the good things of life. This is a reflection which leads to moderation in ourselves, and to kindness and beneficence towards them. It is one which should, as seldom as possible, be forgotten by the rich, or remembered by the poor.

LXXVII. REPORTS IN MORAL MEDICINE.

*Fervet avaritiâ, miseroque cupidine pectus ?
Sunt verba et voces quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem.*
HOR.

MY readers cannot fail to recollect, that I, formerly, appointed certain hours of consultation, at my own house, for those who laboured under maladies of the mind ; and I further promised to publish, from time to time, reports of the state of my practice,—comprehending a description of the symptoms, with the remedies I proposed. I now proceed to fulfil that engagement, by giving some account of the applications made to me at the hours which I had set apart for receiving patients.

The first by whom I was addressed was a middle-aged man, of genteel appearance, and melancholic atrabillious complexion, but with a countenance that bespoke benevolence and sensibility. “ I am come,” said he, “ to complain to you of certain inconsistencies

between the common rules of morality, and the experience of this world. I was educated by virtuous parents, of whom I still retain the most tender remembrance. Their earliest instructions to me were to conquer all selfish feelings, and to cherish benevolence towards my fellow-creatures. They cultivated in me a dislike of every thing ungentle or unsocial, and a sense of generosity, honour, and delicacy, in my intercourse with mankind. On these principles I have regulated my life ;—and what has been my reward ? I have had my kindness imposed on,—my confidence abused,—my honourable feelings sported with,—my fortune ruined,—and my life rendered miserable. And I now plainly see, that had I possessed dispositions the reverse of all I have aimed at, I should, at this day, have been prosperous and happy. The following are one or two instances.

“ A friend applied to me for assistance in his difficulties, and I thought that it would be cruel to refuse him. The sum I advanced was so considerable as to put me to present inconvenience ; and, in the event of its loss, to expose my fortune to serious injury. I therefore took every precaution to secure myself which appeared necessary ; relying implicitly on the fairness of my friend’s disclosure of his circumstances. But I was deceived. He did not actually tell me what was false ;—but he concealed what was true. By this deception, I became involved in the most thorny embarrassments, which ended in a heavy loss ;—and I found that a little more distrust, and less liberality, would have been of advantage to both my feelings and fortune.

“ On another occasion, an old acquaintance of my father's, though unconnected by blood, proposed to leave me his estate. I prevailed on him, much against his will, to give up this design, in favour of a relation of his own ; but, at the same time, I accepted from him a loan, to help me against some difficulties which were pressing me. On the succession of the heir, (who well knew how much he was obliged to me,) his first step was to make a peremptory demand for the money I had borrowed. With this demand it was impossible for me to comply :—and had I not received assistance from one to whom I had never done the least favour, I must have seen the inside of a prison, at the suit of my grateful creditor.

“ A man never knows his fellow-creatures till he has fallen into adversity. The fair-weather aspect of the world presents but one-half of nature. We cannot then measure the selfishness of mankind. I have seen men who, without scruple, would subject others to the loss of thousands, rather than risk a guinea of their own. And these men are thriving and happy. I have told you the opposite effects of my system. It is idle to say that generous feelings and actions are their own reward. I have never found it so. I have been stung by the ingratitude of those whom I assisted ;—as I am now afflicted by the distresses of others which I cannot relieve ;—and, indeed, heavily enough burdened with my own.—What, then, is to be done ? Are we to unlearn all that we have been taught in childhood to receive as settled truths ? Must we reverse the first lessons of education ;—and, to give our

children any chance of happiness, teach them to be cold and selfish?"

"My good Sir," replied I, "you have put to me a difficult and distressing question. It is but too true, that we see generous dispositions lead to anguish, and happiness the lot of the unfeeling and interested. It is, I fear, no less true, that the sources of pain being more numerous in this world than those of pleasure;—the more our sensibilities are awakened, the greater is our chance of suffering. The most selfish of philosophers * declared happiness to consist in a *cold heart, and a good digestion*; and few authorities should be higher than his, as few men ever enjoyed a longer or happier life. Indeed, were I to speak from my own experience, I would say, that the happiest men I have known are those who, to natural good health, and active temper, joined a heart which cared little for any body but themselves. It is true that the delights of a virtuous sympathy rise far higher than the satisfactions of selfishness. But, alas! such delights are few and seldom; while the pains of fellow-feeling are sharp and frequent. But whatever may be our wish on this subject, the matter is not voluntary. Dispositions are the gift of nature;—education can only assist or control. Where a child is born with a feeling and generous heart, I would be cautious of enflaming this to romantic benevolence. Such a temper rather requires to be hardened,—to bear both its own ills, and those of others. Above all,—never should generosity be left unguarded by prudence. The law

* Fontenelle.

of this world is, that each must, in the first place, take care of himself; and, by doing so with reason and fairness, he will be best able to assist others. Of this necessary rule I fear you have been too regardless."

My patient left me with a distrustful and melancholy shake of the head, and I could not but give his hand a warm squeeze at parting. He was succeeded by one of a very different cast. It was a lady, long past her youth, tall in person, of a stiff and precise air, and carrying a lap-dog under her arm. She took a seat ceremoniously,—announcing herself by the name of the Honourable Miss Lucretia Wormwood. She began by telling me, that she doubted not that the distresses she felt would receive all my attention and sympathy,—not only from the regard due to her sex and exalted rank,—but because the great purpose of her life had been nearly similar to my own;—that of amending the faults and follies of her neighbours.—“But, indeed, Mr Keeper,” continued she, “such is the exquisite acuteness of my feelings,—and so bad is the world now grown,—that I really get no rest for thinking of the follies which happen every day around me. There is that silly creature Nancy Bloom, who has married a young fellow that will be tired of her in six months. I did all I could to stop the match;—circulated all the stories I had heard of him,—about his having sold his commission,—ruined himself at play,—and so on,—all out of pure regard to the girl, you know, Sir,—but all to no purpose.—Then there was that awkward story about my neighbour

Mrs Airy, and Major Holster ;—I thought it my duty, as an old friend, to hint something of the matter to her husband ;—not that I believe there was any thing positively wrong ;—but that business of the closet and pair of gloves, was never rightly cleared up.—And you remember, too, sir, the ugly report of the second ace of clubs that dropped out of my Lady Slam's pocket at the card-assembly ;—I dare say no ill was meant ;—but the thing had an odd look ;—Nay, I have it from the best authority, that on a former night——And, dear me, Sir, have you heard of the affair of that thoughtless girl Betsey Racket,—who passed for a beauty, too ;—though, for my part, I never could find it out ;—for except mere red and white, and a pair of tolerable eyes,—well, Sir, they say she has actually gone off with her aunt's footman ;—and, to be sure, there must have been strong reasons—But, indeed, I never expected better of a girl so forward with the men.—Now, Sir, these, and other such things, happening every day before my eyes, really give me so much distress and anxiety,—and so lacerate my feelings,—that I came to see whether any remedy could be fallen upon, for the vices of the age, which are now absolutely past enduring.”—“Madam,” said I, with great gravity, “the remedy I would recommend to you would be, to think less on your neighbours' failings, and more on your own. You will doubtless, during that survey, weigh, in an even balance, indiscretion on the one hand, against envy and censoriousness on the other. Such wholesome statics,

—with a magnesia lozenge, now and then, to dulcify the bile,—will do wonders in your case, I warrant you.”

As my visitor was departing, with an aspect of verjuice, and a curtesy of most rigid declination, an elegant young creature, who had just alighted from her equipage, brushed into the room. She stopped, and gazed after her grim predecessor, with a face of most amusing wonder, till she was out of sight;—then, turning to me, exclaimed—“Heavens! Mr Keeper, what a fright!—Did you ever see such an antediluvian bonnet?—It must positively have been designed for Noah’s grandmother.”—She then changed her features into a graver mood, and sitting down, went on thus—“O sir, do you know, I am the most miserable,—most injured of women. I was persuaded to marry Mr Selby, as all my friends told me he was so rich, and so good-natured, and that I should have every thing my own way. And, now,—would you believe it, sir,—he treats me in the most shocking manner.”—“Indeed! I should not have thought that of Mr Selby.”—“O yes, sir,—it is too true—barbarous in the extreme. Before marriage, it was all kindness, and generosity, and tenderness;—but now—Why, sir, he denies me every little indulgence.—I have given but two balls this winter; and now he refuses me a third, on pretence that it turns his house upside down.—Now, sir, what is a house good for, but to be turned upside down?—And then I wished, in imitation of the Paris ladies, where I was last summer, to have a levee of a few gentlemen, in the morning, at my toilette;—very reasonable I am

sure you will think, sir ;—Well, he positively forbade it.—Nay, the other night, he even refused to let me go to the masked ball,—though Major *Mustache* was kind enough to offer to attend me.—I had got the sweetest dress of a Syren, with gauze drapery, dividing to show the leg ;—and had hit on some of the prettiest airs, to sing in character, you know,—and after all, he would not let me go.—Nay, he even grudges my trifling losses at cards this winter, which scarcely reach a few hundreds.—And, to crown all, he now threatens to take me down to the odious country, before half the season is over.—Did you ever hear any thing so tyrannical ?—Is it possible to endure life on such terms ?—I have been thinking whether to die at once, or to run away from him.—Which would you advise, Mr Keeper ?—But surely the law does not support a husband in such usage.”—“ Why, madam,” said I, “ the law is very vulgar and old-fashioned ; and makes little allowance for the feelings of a fine lady. I would therefore advise you, in the mean time, to accompany your husband to the country,—in preference to either of the other plans you thought of ;—to spend the summer in reading, reflection, household affairs, and cheerful society ;—and by next winter, I engage that you shall find your husband more reasonable.”

The last who made his appearance was a gentleman of an affected languishing air ; who, after seating himself,—coughing in his cambric handkerchief,—smelling to a bottle of salts,—and bowing repeatedly,—declared that he was ashamed to give me so much

trouble ;—but really I had been so kind in my offers, —and he was so sensible of his faults,—that he could not but take this favourable opportunity of correcting them. “ At the same time that I am so candid in my acknowledgments,” continued he, “ I trust that there is something in the source of my failings which will find excuse with you ;—as they mainly flow from a certain softness of disposition, which makes me sympathise too deeply with my fellow-creatures. I am aware, sir, of the ill effects of bestowing charity ;—yet I can never see misery without relieving it. I know that forgiving injuries only leads to their repetition ;—yet I am unable to keep resentment. I have not to learn that ingratitude is the common return for benefits ;—yet I cannot help exerting myself in the service of others. These, I own, sir, are capital blemishes in my character ;—I have struggled in vain to amend them ;—and would feel indebted to you for suggesting some means which might enable me to remove, or at least abate, their influence.”—“ So, sir,” said I, “ under pretence of asking advice, you come here to fish for compliments.—But none shall you have from me.—Be satisfied that such diseases as yours kill not in our time.—Go your ways, and take my word for it, that these fine feelings of yours will never disturb your sleep, nor injure your estate.”

LXXVIII. REPORTS IN MORAL MEDICINE.

——— Si quid

Est animum, differs curandi tempus in annum?

HOR.

I NOW resume the medical reports, whereof I gave a taste to my readers in my last paper,—touching the cases of those who applied to me for advice, on their several mental maladies, failings, or distresses ;—with my prescriptions thereon. My next day's experience was as follows.

The first who entered was a man of good appearance, though inclined to sluggishness and corpulency. He came to complain to me, that all the novelty and interest of life were gone.—“I was born,” continued he, “to an ample fortune, which was encreased by marriage. My wife is an amiable and reasonable woman. I have a hopeful family. My means have still increased without effort of my own, or refusing myself any thing I desire. I do all the good in my power. I enjoy tolerable health ; and an agreeable circle of acquaintance. Every thing, in short, has prospered with me ;—and yet I am little better than miserable. Society, books, amusement, travelling,—I have tried all,—and all have lost their relish. Can you, sir, furnish any thing from your moral CABINET to relieve me?”—“It is easier in your case,” I replied, “to explain the malady, than to suggest the cure. You have been ‘cursed with every gratified desire.’ You

are so unfortunate as never to have known misfortune ; and such is the perverseness of our nature, that we are never thoroughly sensible of good, till we have suffered ill. I see, however, that you are of indolent habits. The springs of both body and mind have lost their elasticity. Though without positive disease, your relaxed fibres prevent your ever enjoying thorough healthy sensation. Rouse yourself to bodily exercise ;—diversify it with mental employment ;—persevere in active study, and active beneficence ;—and I trust that you will recover the tone of your mind.”

My next visitor was a pretty blooming girl, dressed in the extremity of the mode, who told me that she had come out only last winter,—had been much admired,—and during the whole season, had continued happy in herself, and well-disposed towards all the world.—But that, during the present year, several new beauties had appeared ; who had taken a great share of the admiration from her.—That she still loved amusements and public places more violently than ever ; but felt an indignation against the bad taste of the men, and the airs of her rivals, which poisoned all her enjoyment.—That her feelings sometimes found vent in words ; and she caught herself, now and then, using expressions, and telling stories, about other young ladies, which were not very flattering, nor strictly agreeable to truth. I informed her that her case was one of a very alarming kind ;—no less than an incipient fit of Envy and Detraction of the most malignant type.—I enjoined abstinence from all

balls, concerts, and other places of public resort (except the Church) for the remainder of the season ;—recommended a regular course of the CABINET, morning and evening ;—and, as soon as possible in the spring, to go down to the country, to recruit her health, beauty, and temper,—all of which had suffered from the dissipations and rivalries of a town life.

I was now addressed by a sleek, round, well-conditioned man, of a demure aspect, and substantial appearance. He had a look of assumed gravity and meekness, through which it was not difficult to discern a good opinion of himself. He told me, with a sort of self-denying whine, that he was engaged in trade :—That Providence had blessed his poor endeavours with a competency—(“ Not much short of a plum Mr Keeper—but no praise to me.”)—That most of his family were well settled in the world, including two nephews whom he had provided for :—That he was a strict churchman of the Independent persuasion, and was not without some influence in his sect—“ but Heaven forbid I should glory therein—In short, Mr Keeper,” continued he, “ I have many causes of worldly pride and puffing up, as you may perceive ; but notwithstanding thereof, I am liable to occasional sinkings and depressions of spirits,—proceeding, as my friends assure me, from over lowliness and humility. For instance,—when the settlement of Mr *Spintext* was carried against me in the congregation, I kept my bed two days : and I was equally cast down by losing our lawsuit about the meeting-house, with those backsliders of the New Light. Now, sir, hear-

ing of your skill in cases of mental distress,—and your kind offers of assistance *gratis*—(on which word he laid a particular emphasis), I have used the freedom to trouble you with these particulars, in the view of getting something to elevate and support me.”—“It is well, my good friend,” said I, “that you thought of consulting me,—for you have quite mistaken your ailment. It is not humility that is the matter with you;—but a pretty strong infection of pride, both worldly and spiritual;—and that pettishness and spoiling which grows from long prosperity. I must tell you further, that your true motive for coming hither was to display all your merits and advantages; and to draw from me encouragement to your conceit. But I will treat you better than you deserve or desire; and inform you plainly that your case is a very bad one, and requires the most speedy and active remedies. To be short,—I must counsel you to meditate less on your wealth, and good deeds, and spiritual influence;—and more on your hypocrisy and uncharitableness.—To estimate your character, not by the flattery of dependents, but by the standard of your Bible; where, if you look for it sincerely, you may find, in what true humility consists:—though some have the perverseness to draw from this source fresh fuel to their pride.”—My patient, on this blunt address, screwed up his mouth into a pretty tart expression;—but soon resuming his habitual calmness, he rose slowly from his chair, made a dry sliding bow, and left the room without uttering a word.

The next person who appeared was a slender young man, with a flaunting air and dress, where ill-assorted finery strove with shabbiness. On sitting down, he drew a paper from his pocket, which he told me was a tragedy of his own composing. He had been bred a linen-draper with his uncle, who would have provided for him, could he have submitted to such plebeian drudgery. But his soul was smitten with the love of dramatic poesy, wherein he had resolved with himself to rival Shakspeare. He had accordingly composed a tragedy of the deepest dye, which he had prevailed on the manager of the playhouse to bring out ;—but the players had done it so little justice, that it was damned incontinently. Several other essays which he had since made, were refused by the theatre. Convinced of the injustice he had suffered, he came to me, in the first place, to read his play, and appeal to my taste against the Vandalism of the age ;—and secondly, to ask my advice on the state of his mind, which was tormented with an unquenchable thirst of poetical fame, and impatience of all rival merit. He added, that, on a fair comparison of his productions with those of Shakspeare and Otway, he really could not see where all the difference lay. As the youth had an ingenuous look, I addressed him mildly,—“ Pray, sir, would your uncle still take you back, were you to forswear the Muse ? ”—“ I doubt not that he would,—could I submit to such a degrading drudgery. ”—I begged to see his tragedy ; and, after turning over a leaf or two, I gravely tore it across, and thrust it into the fire. Though my pro-

ceeding was deliberate enough, the lad was so confounded by this unexpected movement, that he sat speechless on his chair, and made no effort to rescue his expiring progeny. I then went up, and taking him by the hand, wished him joy of being cured of his malady, which, I said, was wholly concentrated in that villanous paper. I exhorted him, withal, to resume his station behind the counter; and I hoped there was no fear of a relapse. By way of precaution, however, I strictly interdicted him from opening a book of poetry,—entering a playhouse,—or touching a pen,—except to post his leger,—for the space of twelve kalendar months.—“Not even try my hand at a fugitive piece,”—said he, looking back into the room.—“Not for your life!”—thundered I, as he shut the door.

This patient was succeeded by a gentleman somewhat past the middle age, whose bilious complexion, shawl vest, and ruby ring, explained where he had passed his days. He said that he had realized a good fortune in the East, where he had spent the greater part of his life, and had lately returned to enjoy himself in his native country. But as he had been used to occupation abroad,—and never had any turn for reading,—he found himself much at a loss how to dispose of his time, and was devoured with *ennui*. He begged to know whether I could suggest any thing for his relief.—“There are, Sir,” returned I, “two specifics in your choice,—which may be taken either together or separately, as the patient may incline,—both infallible for preventing the stagnation of life.

The one is a young wife ;—the other the management of a farm. Either of these will provide you with a very pretty torture, and keep your spirits in circulation for the rest of your days. Of the two, each has its advantage. The one, you may, after a time, get rid of, if you find it too troublesome :—The other, in about an equal period, will probably get rid of you."

The subject of my concluding interview was of a graver cast than any of the foregoing. A young man entered, of a very engaging appearance, but with an air of much seriousness and embarrassment. He told me that his most intimate friend had, some years before, married a charming woman, with whom he had lived happily ever since, and who had become the mother of two children. That he himself had been then abroad ; but on his return, some months ago, had been welcomed by his friend, with his ancient affection ; and received on the most intimate footing in his family. His friend, however, being, for some time past, engaged with business out of doors, he had been left much in the society of the lady ; the charms of whose beauty and conversation had too far engaged him. He had become a little suspicious of his feelings : and, not caring to trust his own opinion, was desirous of knowing mine.—" Pray, Sir," said I, " how frequent and how long-continued, are your visits to this lady ?"—" Daily, for several hours :"—" Have they increased or diminished of late ?"—" Increased, I fear :"—" How do you feel when absent ?"—" Impatient till I see her again."—" How does she receive you ?"—" I think favourably."—" Is her husband uneasy ?"—" I cannot

say with certainty :—But my conscience has sometimes made me think so :—and I now chiefly call when I know he is abroad.”—“ Ah !”—cried I, with a twinge of sudden pain,—“ that is an ugly symptom.—In short, Sir, the case is plain :—You are on the verge of a precipice :—One only chance of escape is left.—If you would not be a villain,—fly !”—“ Nay, Sir, you are too peremptory :—I have not yet tried the effects of my own exertions,—of calling reason and duty to aid :—I may diminish my visits :—But I cannot bear the thoughts of flying :—that is a sure resource, when all else has failed.”—“ You cannot bear the thoughts of flying :—Will it be more easy when you are deeper engaged ?—You shrink from crushing out the spark :—Can you hope to extinguish the flame ?—Remember that Heaven is filled with good-doers, and Hell with good-intenders.”—“ But, surely, Sir, I may venture on a short trial.”—“ You have tried too long already.—It is this fatal irresolution which leads to all great crimes ;—and none so often as the present. I am no extravagant moralist ;—but this case admits of neither delay nor compromise. Again and again, I repeat, if you would not be a villain,—fly !”—

LXXIX. CONSULTATION ABOUT GIVING A BALL.

Omnes homines qui de rebus dubiis consultant, ab odio,
amicitia, ira, atque misericordia, vacuos esse decet.

SALLUST.

In close recess and secret conclave sat,
Frequent and full.

MILTON.

I WENT, the other day, to pay a visit to my friend Lady Constant, who is at present living in Edinburgh with her family, while Sir William attends his duty in Parliament. The hour I chose was earlier than is consistent with the laws of fashionable inquiry,—it being scarcely one o'clock. But this is my custom with those whom I really wish to see. I found her Ladyship, with her daughters, and one or two of their female friends, in deep consultation round a table; with a mass of letters, notes, lists, and other papers, lying before them, which would not have misbecome the *bureau* of a Secretary of State. On my entrance,—“O my good friend,” cried Lady Constant, “I am glad you are come, to support me against these giddy creatures, who have almost forced me into giving a Ball.”—“Dear Mamma,” said Miss Charlotte, “how can you talk so, when the thing is all settled? I sent off William with cards half-an-hour ago:—and it would be so awkward, and so monstrous, to draw back now;—when the thing is so proper and reasonable in itself too:—I am sure, Mr Keeper, will say so.”—“Perfectly reasonable,” returned I, “provided my

pretty Charlotte engages to open the ball with me.” —“ Agreed,” cried she,—“ but I doubt if you will keep your engagement.” —“ O fye,”—said Lady Constant, addressing herself to me,—“ is this all the help I get from you, in my prudent inclinations?—I protest you are worse than the girls.”

The truth is, that, like a crafty auxiliary, I joined the side which I saw was to prevail in the end ;—and counted on less displeasure from the mother in supporting the plan, than I should have had from the daughters in opposing it. So a Ball there was to be ;—and the great question now was, who were to be invited ?—a thorny point,—to which the fair deliberators had in part proceeded before my arrival. Various lists of names were lying before them, as long as the muster-roll of a regiment ; and divided, subdivided, and classified, with all the method of a *catalogue raisonné*. One comprehended the males, another the females ;—one the old, and one the young. One class was entered as *first rate* ;—a second was *middling* ;—and a third absolutely *below par*. There was a department of dancing men and women ;—and these, again, were distributed under the heads of *waltzes*, *quadrilles*, and *country-dances*. A particular place was allotted for card-playing dowagers of both sexes. Some were noted down as stayers to supper ;—others were expected to go off with an ice or a jelly ;—and one or two were stuck aside at a corner, who would favour the company with a song.

One of the young ladies,—raising herself upright, on her chair,—and making a pause of profound medita-

tion,—said ;—“ Indeed, mamma, I believe, after all, it will be absolutely necessary to have two parties ; for there are so many old fat men and women,—who take up so much room,—and are so much in the way,—that we must positively dispose of them at a common *squeeze*.”—“ And pray, Harriet,” said Lady Constant, “ whom are we to invite under this flattering distinction of old and fat ?—They will doubtless be much gratified.”—“ O, it can be quite easily managed :—We can have a few *first rates*, you know, at both, to avoid particularity :—But really, there are some good sort of, odd kind of people, that one can shuffle into a rout, without much notice, who would never do at a ball.”

“ Charlotte,” said another of the young ladies, addressing her eldest sister, “ Do you think we must ask the Bundles ?”—“ O heavens ! No,”—exclaimed several voices at once.—“ Impossible !—Odious vulgar people :—We never can think of it.—There is the mother and five daughters ;—and they will all come without mercy, and sit till the last candle is burnt out ;—besides taking so much room at supper ;—and then the task of getting partners for the misses :—O no !—it is quite out of the question.”—“ Indeed, girls,” said Lady Constant, “ we must invite some of them. They are very good people,—and our neighbours in country,—and Mr Bundle has always supported your father’s interest :—We need not ask the whole.”—Here a general sigh from the young ladies spoke a sorrowful acquiescence. I shook my head with a rueful air of condolence ;—but this was thought too like

a joke on so grave a matter,—and I was reprimanded accordingly.

At this time Mr Edward Constant, her Ladyship's third son, who is now pursuing the study of the law at our University, came in, and joined the deliberation. "I wonder,"—said Miss Caroline,—“if we might venture to ask Mrs Waddle:—You know she is laid up with a sprained ankle.”—“I fear you can scarcely venture,”—replied Miss Flourish, one of the assessors of this solemn council,—“for I heard she had got better.”—“I saw her out the other day,” said Edward, “in her old tub of a carriage,—with the lame horses, and fat coachman;—and she would come on crutches rather than stay away.”—So this experiment was given up as too hazardous.

“Pray, mamma,” said Miss Harriet, “shall we have the floor chalked in imitation of natural flowers, or a mosaic pavement?—I am rather for the mosaic.”—“Neither, my dear;—you must just be satisfied with the floor as it came from the hands of the carpenter.”—“O horrid! shocking! barbarous! odious! antiquated!”—burst from many fair lips at once.—“You cannot be serious mother,”—said Edward,—“we had better give up the thing altogether, than do it in a shabby stile.”—“There,”—cried all the young ladies in a breath,—“there were the Wilmots, and the Wilkies, and the Williamsons, and the Hays, and the Grays, and the Sharps, and the Clarkes, and the Suttons, and the Duttons,—and, in short, every body had chalked floors:—Even that vulgar woman Mrs Overdo:—Dear mamma, after agreeing to every thing so

handsomely, to stand on such a trifle.”—“ Why then,” said Edward, “ I suppose we shall have no orange plants for the staircase neither ;—nor balsams, nor myrtles, nor”——“ Why,” said Lady Constant, “ if I were to go to any excess, it would rather be in this way than in the other. But I think that both may be very well dispensed with.”

Here, a little girl of five years, the youngest of the family, who was sitting on my knee,—and none of the least interested in all that was going on,—suddenly exclaimed,—“ O dear Mamma, let us have the pretty flowers.”—“ Thou little imp,”—said I, taking her by the chin, and turning her cherub face towards mine,—“ art thou already raising thy tender voice at the shrine of vanity ?”

In going through the lists, the name of Mrs All-trump was mentioned.—“ I don’t think we should ask her,” said one of the young ladies, “ for she did not get us invited to her sister Lady Lemonade’s ball.”—“ Very true,” said Miss Flourish,—“ Nothing was ever so cross and ill-natured. For my part, I spoke to Lady Midnight, to write to General Dread-nought, to apply to Governor Indigo, to use his interest with Sir Harry Flash, whose wife, you know, is Lady Lemonade’s particular friend ;—but all to no purpose. I’m sure I sent fifty cards and messages about it ;—and was actually dressed and waiting till ten o’clock of the evening of the ball ;—before I gave up hopes ;—but all in vain.—Never was any thing so spiteful :—No—I would by no means ask either of them.”

When the name of Mr Vapid was brought forward—"Why," said Lady Constant, "should we ask that insipid coxcomb? I never could find out what he was good for. He is neither young, nor handsome, nor agreeable. He neither dances, nor sings, nor laughs, nor converses, nor does any one thing you can put a name upon. His character is made up of nothings."—"But, mamma, he is the fashion.—He is to be seen every where.—That alone excuses all faults,—and makes up for all deficiencies;—and without it every thing is unavailing. So we must have him."—"Besides," added Edward, "he drives the neatest curricule in town."—"Methinks, friend Edward," said I, "it were better logic to invite his coach-maker."

"We must send cards to Mr Homely and his daughter," said Lady Constant,—“they are worthy people, and will take it as a compliment.”—"Yes"—said Miss Charlotte rather faintly—"very worthy people to be sure;—but"——"Aye,"—added Miss Harriet,—“don't you think, Mamma, that Kitty Homely would feel rather strange, poor thing, among such a crowd;—they know so few people:—But certainly if you wish it,”—"We must make a selection, you know, mamma," said Charlotte, "as we cannot have every body:—So, if you please, we may put a cross at the name of the Homelys, till we see:—"—And so this question was referred to a committee. I could not but admire the skill with which these young tacticians got quit of a disagreeable motion, without giving it a direct negative.

“ Well,” said Lady Constant, “ by what I see of this affair, we shall be sure of offending many, and probably please none.”

Soon after, one of the young ladies, leaning her cheek on her hand, said, with a look of deep thought ; —“ I fear we cannot avoid asking Miss Clackit ;—you know we have been twice at her house.—But then, whom shall we get for a partner to her ?”—“ Partner !” echoed another,—“ you cannot suppose that she will dance.”—“ Depend upon it, she will, if she has an opportunity :—Besides, she must have somebody’s arm to dangle on all night :—Whom shall we get ?—O let us invite Mr Cubley.”—“ Yes, he will do admirably :—He is the very man :—We can put them together, you know ; and thus get quit of two disagreeables at once :—Otherwise, indeed, the horrid man might ask one to dance.”—“ Young ladies,” said I, with much gravity, “ have you no scruple of conscience, in thus, deliberately and aforethought, condemning an unoffending young gentleman to Miss Clackit, for a whole evening ?”—“ O, not in the least :—They are just fit for one another.”—“ Well,” returned I, “ I have a great mind to do justice on you, by relieving him of his fair lady, for an hour or two, and sending him to dance with you all round.”

Vain, very vain, would it be for me to attempt conducting myself, or my readers, through the wilderness of names, additions, and places of abode, which passed under review in my presence ;—far less to exhibit the manifold reasons, *pro* and *con*, for inviting or

passing by. In such matters, indeed, I perceived that this fair conclave possessed a nicety and rapidity of tact, quite beyond my comprehension;—and decided on the merits or demerits of the successive candidates with an intuitive readiness which seemed like magic. I admired no less their accurate knowledge of all the motions, designs, or engagements, which were at present afloat among the *beau monde*,—even unto the tenth or twelfth degree,—in so far as these might further or impede the great object in view.

Soon after, the conversation took a turn to the weighty matter of supper and refreshments;—in the, course of which, ices of cream and water,—jellies, negus, lemonades,—*Gateaux* plain and figured,—mulled port, cold lamb, tongues, turkies, and oranges,—were successively discussed. Nor were the animating strains of the music, and the merits of its professors, passed over without due remembrance.

There now occurred a digression on the subject of dress,—originating in the mention of a lovely lace robe which Miss Plum, the heiress, had worn at my Lady Packwell's rout. In a moment, we were involved in a labyrinth of crapes, lutestrings, and lustres,—silver muslins, and French silks,—feathers, flounces, and *bandeaux*. But here, finding myself wholly out of my depth,—and hopeless of recalling the fair interlocutors to any subject within my capacity,—I rose and took my leave.

LXXX. THE TERM OF REMOVAL.

Arma virûm, tabulæque, et Troia gaza.

VIRG.

THERE is an annual visitation which afflicts our land, and troubles the enjoyment of this summer season of delight, known in our northern region by the name of *Flitting*;—to our southern neighbours by that of *Removal*;—and to those beyond the British channel, by the appropriate term of *Demenagement*, which may be interpreted by the Hibernian phrase of *Turning a house out at the windows*. In short, I allude to the practice which prevails, at this period of the year, of transferring ourselves, and our moveables, from one dwelling place to another. This operation is usually carried on under the broad eye of Phœbus;—but there is a variety of it practised by those of a romantic turn, called in vulgar language a *Moonlight Flitting*. Such persons,—abhorrent of the garish sun,—and shrinking from the eyes of an unfeeling world,—choose the sweet and solemn hour;—and transfer their moveables amid the soft breezes and refreshing dews of night. If, absorbed in such elegant contemplations, they at times pretermit the vulgar concerns of rent and taxes,—what soul of sensibility can blame the venial forgetfulness?

To describe the disturbance excited in our peaceful city during this season of locomotion;—the disem-boguing and evomition of all sorts of ware, hitherto

reposing in the inmost *penetralia* of the mansion ;—from the pots and kettles that adorn the kitchen, to the broken tables, cracked jars, and three-legged stools which find refuge in the garret ;—the tumbling of damask window-curtains on greasy grates ;—the union of elegant sofas with pot-hooks and gridirons :—To enumerate the chaos of carpets, screens, blankets, *escritoirs*, and elbow-chairs, which are piled in heaps before the evacuated domiciles,—waiting their turn of removal :—Such task would exceed all powers, but those of a practised auctioneer. The destruction of property, under this process, is so great, that, by an equation well known in domestic statics, three removals are reckoned tantamount to a fire.

No one can have a perfect idea of this misery, in his own case, who has not felt it by experience. To be roused at daybreak from your peaceful dormitory :—To see it, in three minutes, metamorphosed, from a couch of repose, into a bundle of poles, and a sphere of feather-beds :—To feel your chairs gradually departing from under your fainting limbs, and leaving you to lean against the wainscot, or desperately squat down on a step of the stair :—To see your well arranged and nicely bound books hustled into a confused heap :—Your prints and pictures jammed against pointed corners :—Your polished drawing-room tables elbowed by the lobby stove :—Your delicate china, or lucid mirrors, trembling between adverse clothes-presses :—These are trials beyond the phlegm of a Dutchman, or a predestinarian.

Last of all, arrives the summit of wretchedness, in the transfer of your wine. Then must you dislodge, from their inmost bin, the venerable cobwebbed tenants of many lustrums. Then are you perplexed with the dangers of confusion. Vintage crowds on vintage :—seal displaces seal :—and the precious *Fifteen* is commingled with the balmy *Twenty-five*. But even errors more fatal occur. The mild subacid hock is blended with the volatile champaigne :—The delicate Bourdeaux with the rough-smacking port :—The boasted antique sherry with the Madeira of London's prime particular. Months and years must pass away, before you get your new cellar methodized into the learned order of its predecessor.

Nor do the distresses of this annual visitation rest entirely with the actors themselves. A certain proportion of the evil overflows upon their fellow-citizens ;—particularly those in the vicinity of the commotion. You cannot issue from your door, without being intercepted by a mount of moveables ; or jostled by porters panting under their loads. You must pick your wary steps through a labyrinth of stools and baskets :—Here the long spike of a bedpost unseats your wig :—There a pair of tongs become familiar with your neck-cloth :—Here you strike your shin upon the corner of a tub :—There a bustling Abigail runs a band-box against your nose. You are awakened, before the first cock, with the thundering of hammers :—and throughout the day discordant sounds are rife ;—the unscrewing of bolts,—the dislodging of grates,—the incessant war of tongues. The only amends you have

for all this suffering is the selfish consolation of Lucretius, which contrasts your own comparative rest on shore, with the turmoil of those driven to and fro by the storms and billows of removal.

To none of the inmates of our city is this season of change so momentous, as our chairmen and street-porters. This race of hardy Mountaineers pass their lives in an alternation between the extremes of indolence and exertion, better fitted to their habits than the steady labour of the Lowland artizan. In ordinary times, they lounge and gossip, the live-long day, at the corners of the streets: But now, with the *flitting* season, comes their period of toil. When I see them panting under their loads, I cannot help sometimes feeling compassion;—but I believe it is misplaced. They hail this as their harvest. They taste the chief ingredients of human happiness,—occupation and profit: and their cheerful looks, and brisk movements, form a striking contrast with the listlessness of their usual demeanour. I must add, that habitual inaction does not, in their case, produce its usual ill effects, of intemperance or misconduct: for there is no more decent or orderly class amongst our population.

At this season of locomotion, I sometimes turn my walk to the ancient alleys, and dingy retreats, which are tenanted by the humbler ranks of our city. Here, the appearance of all things is on a lower scale, and the confusion more interminable. Crazy and broken implements are turned out to the light of day, which seem scarcely worth the cost of transportation. But,

amidst these, are sometimes to be seen articles of a better quality, which time or fashion have degraded from their pristine sphere:—Curtains of thread-bare damask, and *Settees* of tarnished brocade:—Cabinets of antiquated splendour, where the solid structure has survived the faded gold, and started panelling, whose fresh lustre ornamented their prime. Yet it often happens, that these discarded forms excel in beauty and convenience those which have succeeded them. The sway of fashion thinks it but an ordinary triumph to persuade us out of the evidence of our senses.

On the occasion of this annual movement, a few years ago, I was wandering among the southern suburbs of our city; and came down that street, little known to my fashionable readers, whose amenities, in ancient times, procured it the denomination of *the Pleasance*. It certainly has no very visible pretensions to this name at present; although, when first arising amidst open fields and trees,—and overshadowed by the frowning ledge of Salisbury Rock,—its claims might be better founded. It is now inhabited by the lowest and poorest of the people; to whom—and to all the intermediate degrees,—have gradually descended the cast-dwellings of their superiors. At the door of one of these humble mansions, I saw heaped up a collection of poor furniture; and a little girl, about eight years of age, sitting watching it, with an infant in her lap. As I approached, I was struck with the opposite expression in the countenances of the two:—For while the child was smiling and crowing with all the gaiety of infancy, its little nurse was in tears. On

coming up, I asked her what was the matter. She told me that their landlord was a hard man; and had not only forced them to leave the house, but was threatening to sell their furniture;—so that they would neither have a house to shelter in, nor a bed to lie on:—that her mother was a widow, and had no children but themselves two, and a boy who worked with a shoemaker hard by:—that her mother had gone to try and soften the landlord, or borrow a little money to satisfy his claims;—and had left her in charge of the child and furniture:—“But there,” added the girl, “she’s coming.”—On turning my eyes down the street, I saw approaching a poor woman, of delicate make, and with a countenance pale and exhausted; and along with her a stout athletic man,—a house-carpenter,—who was her landlord. When they came up, I said to the man,—“My good friend, this is a hard matter, to turn out these poor people to the street, if they have been decent tenants.”—“Decent enough, Sir,”—said he,—“but they canna pay my rent.—I have a wife and five childer to support mysell:—and what am I to do without it?—I work as hard as ony man,—and after a’, enough ado to make the ends meet:—we maun look to our ain first:—Naebody bates plack or farden to me.”—“Why, my friend, there is something in what you say,” resumed I,—“but have you no other fault to find with your tenants, but the want of rent?”—“None whatever, Sir:—They’re douce decent folk,—I’m no denying that,—and have been misfortunate;—and I would be agreeable enough to do them a good turn;—but it fa’s hard on me to help them:—A’ the savings that ever I could save were laid out

on this house ; and now, if I canna get my rent, it's a real bad job indeed. Necessity's a hard master."—The woman then told me that her husband was a mason ; and was killed, a year before, by falling from a house :—That she had since endeavoured to support her children by sewing ; but being feeble in health, was able for little work :—That she could produce the best certificates both to her own character, and her late husband's :—But being now a whole year in arrear of rent, she had no means of making it up. Here she sighed deeply, but with an expression of resignation more than complaint ; and her daughter bursting openly into tears, she took the child from her, saying,—“ Jeanie, dinna greet, bairn,—ye ken wha orders a' this,—an' we maunna murmur at his will.”—On inquiry, I found that the amount was not large ; so telling the man where to call on me next morning, I promised that he should be paid in full ;—and that I would also be security for the next half year. The gratitude of the poor creatures, on this escape from ejection, I will not stop to describe. The neighbours, who had gathered round, began to bestir themselves with alacrity, in carrying back the furniture into the house ; and before I left them it was half replaced. I gave a small aid to the poor woman, and said I would inquire further about her.

My kind Judith needed but a hint to follow out this path of beneficence. She investigated, and was satisfied. All that the poor woman had told me was true ; and much more, of a favourable nature, which she had not. In short, she turned out to be one deserving of our kindness. After her half year had expired,

we got her removed to a better dwelling; where, by my sister's exertions, she is now well employed. The little boy has been apprenticed with his former master, and the whole family are thriving and happy.—But, amidst all her thankfulness, the poor woman chiefly dwells on that blessed day when I took my solitary walk through *the Pleasance*.

LXXXI. FOUNDATIONS OF MORALITY.

Quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo.

HOR.

WHAT makes one action *good*, and another action *bad*?—How do I discover one action to be *good*, and another to be *bad*?—Why should I do what is *good*, and abstain from what is *bad*?—These three questions comprehend the whole grounds or principles of moral science.—The first involving an inquiry into the *criterion* or *quality* which constitutes;—the second into the *faculty* which apprehends;—the third into the *sanction* which enforces,—Morality.

These questions,—though in their nature distinct,—and capable of being considered separately,—do still run into each other by imperceptible gradations; and have been often blended together by writers on this subject. Mr Hume, in his *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, chiefly considers the first question,—namely, the *test* or *criterion*, or *quality*, by

which we determine an action to be good or bad :— though he combines this occasionally with discussions on the Faculty which makes the distinction ; and on the Sanction which urges us to good, and repels us from evil.—The main design of Dr Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, again, is the investigation into the *faculty* which distinguishes between good and bad : though his subject also leads him to inquire largely into the test or quality of moral actions.—The inquiries of Dr Hutcheson, and Dr Reid, are principally directed, like those of Smith, to the Faculty which judges of morality.—Dr Paley, on the other hand, turns his chief attention, like Mr Hume, to the criterion or quality which constitutes the goodness or badness of an action ; but treats more expressly than the others of the *sanctions* which enforce morality. Among the ancients, Aristotle and Cicero have both left us Treatises on Ethics ; but they chiefly confine themselves to inquiries into the nature and modifications of the several virtues and vices ; and rather discuss the first principles of the science incidentally,—in the consideration of particular examples,—than enter upon them as express subjects of investigation. Indeed, it was mainly to the discussion of practical questions that the ancients applied their reasonings in Moral Science, —certainly not the least useful branch of the study*.

* This paper was written before the appearance of Sir James Mackintosh's valuable Dissertation on the progress of Ethical Philosophy, prefixed to the seventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. He strongly insists on the errors which have arisen among ethical writers, from confounding the faculty which discriminates,—with the criterion which determines,—a moral action.

Mr Hume's theory as to the test of morality,—in which he is followed by Dr Paley,—is, that the goodness or badness of an action consists in its general *Utility* or *Expediency*—its tendency to promote the benefit or injury of mankind. This, it is plain, comes pretty nearly to a question of argument, or proof;—and depends, for its decision, on the same faculties whereby we determine truth or falsehood;—namely, the Reason, Judgment, or Understanding.

Dr Smith considers the Faculty by which we judge of moral actions, to be a species of *Sympathy*,—adapting itself, in a weaker degree, to the feelings of the actor or sufferer. This is plainly the doctrine of a separate MORAL SENSE,—its mode of operation being only explained in a particular way. Whether this explanation be just or not, all must be sensible of the originality of its conception,—the felicity of its application to human life—and the graceful and touching eloquence by which it is adorned, in the work we are considering.

Dr Hutcheson, and Dr Reid, on the other hand, suppose our moral determinations to be guided by a peculiar Faculty, called by them the MORAL SENSE,—which is expressly adapted to the apprehension of such subjects,—and which is entirely distinct from Reason,—though, like Reason, it is liable to error, and capable of improvement from discipline and culture. Dr Smith's theory, as already said, is the same in substance,—though he attributes our moral determinations to other known faculties of the mind. It is objected to such theories, however modified, that they

discredit all fixed standards of morality ; and reduce the test of the merit or demerit of every action to the feelings of the individual, operating by this instinctive Faculty or Sense. In making this objection, it is plain that the objectors impute to the supporters of a *Moral Sense*, that they consider it as not merely the Faculty which apprehends,—but as the Judge which determines,—a moral action. And there is no doubt that the imputation is, in some measure, just. Even Smith,—but still more Hutcheson and Reid,—represent their Moral Sense as able, without any external criterion, to judge of the merit or demerit of an action.

I shall afterwards inquire into the weight of this objection to the doctrine of a Moral Sense ;—but, in the mean time, will return to the first question proposed in the beginning of this paper,—the inquiry into the test or criterion of morality.

Mr Hume's doctrine on this head, as already mentioned, is, that the morality of an action depends on its *Utility*—on its tendency to promote the general good of mankind. The word *Utility*, taken in this enlarged sense, has a signification wholly different from the *Utile* of Cicero ;—to the investigation of which he devotes the second book of his *Offices* ;—and which he contradistinguishes from the *Honestum*, treated of in the first book. Cicero confines the meaning of the term to *individual utility*,—or a lawful self-interest ;—and employs his third book in showing when it must yield to the *Honestum*. This last term, indeed, expresses more nearly what we understand by *Morality*.

Neither must Hume's and Paley's doctrine of *Utility* be confounded with another use of the term, somewhat more extensive than that of Cicero,—namely, the *particular* utility or benefit of an action, not merely to the party concerned, but to mankind. Their test is the utility of an action, supposing the practice of it universal and permanent:—In other words,—not *individual*,—nor even *particular*,—but *general* utility. For example:—Why is murder a bad action? A given murder may not only produce great advantage to the individual who commits it;—but may be, on the whole, useful to society, in the particular instance,—as by transferring a large fortune from a worthless to a worthy owner. But the question is,—What would become of private security, if it were generally held lawful for any one to take a life which he thought useless or hurtful? Such a doctrine would be subversive of human society,—and is therefore contrary to general utility. The same observation applies to robbery, theft, forgery, and other crimes.

The case, stated in this simple form, admits of little doubt. But occasions arise, where it becomes far more puzzling to balance between the *general* and *particular* utility;—or between a *more general* and a *less general* utility. This it is, which creates the great difficulty in our moral determinations. And here the advocates of an *Innate sense* may throw back on those who adopt the criterion of *Utility*, the same reproach of uncertainty which is applied to their own theory. For, if one person be misled, as to the morality of an action, by trusting to his own feelings;—

another may equally err in estimating one species of utility higher than another, under the guidance of reason. There is thus a difficulty, common to both theories, in attaining to fixed standards in morality,—the most important of all objects in ethical inquiries:—The speculations as to the distinguishing Faculty, though curious and interesting, being of far inferior moment.

That cases occur, where particular consequences of utility may outweigh the importance,—and justify the infringement,—of a more general rule,—can hardly be disputed. Thus, (to use the illustration of Dr Paley) if, by telling a lie, you could prevent a man from blowing up a house, and destroying many innocent lives,—you might be justified in infringing so important a rule of general utility as that of speaking truth. But the difficulty lies in those cases where the balance of utility is not so clear on either side;—and the consequence is, that the same action is by one man esteemed a foul crime,—by another, an act of virtue. The robber, who seizes a purse on the highway, says that he only takes a superfluity from the rich miser, and distributes it among the poor. The assassins of Julius Cæsar,—of Henry III. and IV. of France,—of William Prince of Orange,—of Regent Murray,—of Cardinal Beaton,—of Archbishop Sharp,—all gloried in the deeds which they committed;—alleging that the particular good, in each case, outweighed the general evil of assassination.

To take an instance still more striking than any of the above;—and to examine, a little more minutely,

the grounds of the moral determination :—It is recorded of the Duke of Alva, when on his deathbed, that he was asked, whether he felt no compunction at the remembrance of the many thousands whom he had put to death, while governor of the Netherlands, on account of their religious opinions? He answered, that what he had done at that time was his dying consolation; and he trusted that it would be an atonement for his other sins. And if you admit the justness of the system of belief on which this man acted, you must subscribe to his views of morality, even on the principle of general utility. The most general interest of mankind is assuredly their eternal salvation. To this all worldly interests are as nothing. Now the Duke of Alva argued thus. The system of faith advanced by the heretics leads to infallible perdition. Its spreading will ruin millions yet unborn. But if I can prevent this, by the death of a few thousands, I sacrifice the less general to the more general utility. If the premises be admitted, the conclusion follows by a very just logic. All the error lay in overrating the importance of matters of speculative belief.

The above instances, it may be remarked, do not disprove that the principle of Utility is a just test or standard of moral actions. In them this test was even admitted. The only question was, where the chief Utility lay?—*which* was the more general of two rules?—or *which* was the rule, and *which* the exception?

It was to elucidate such questions that the science of *Casuistry* was invented ; but it ended by puzzling and confounding them more than ever. At the same time, it cannot be denied that questions of morality often require, for their solution, a considerable exertion of intellect. There are cases of conflicting duties. There are instances of men acting wrong, from mere want of discrimination to see what is right.

The above difficulties form the chief objection to the doctrine of Utility being held as the rule or standard by which to determine the merit of an action. If men are liable, it is said, to differ so much about what Utility is, the difficulty is only removed one step, and the test becomes just as fallible as any supposed Innate Feeling. To this the reply is, that Morality, when placed on the foundation of Utility, has at least the greatest security from error which can be obtained. It is brought to the same rules of determination,—and subjected to the same faculties,—by which we judge of truth and falsehood ; and admits of the same improvement from reasoning, experience, and knowledge. The error of the Duke of Alva, in the instance above quoted, lay in the first principle which he assumed,—namely, that a slight variation in matters of faith or form necessarily led to eternal punishment :—And this was a mere error of the understanding. When reason is more enlightened, men come to see the absurdity of such a notion :—how inconsistent it is with the goodness of the Deity, and with the whole spirit of Christianity. As the human mind advances in cultivation, therefore, Morality improves

along with reason, and gradually tends toward certainty and perfection.

In like manner, it is probable, that some have felt greater remorse from the omission of a trifling ritual observance, than others have felt from the perpetration of atrocious crimes. This, too, arises from the imperfect culture of the reasoning Faculty, and the consequent miscalculation of the real importance of things.

Neither should this uncertainty in our moral judgments lead to any doubt of there being a standard of Morality,—a real and eternal distinction between *right* and *wrong*. Men differ in opinion as to the weight of an argument,—as to the justness of a conclusion,—yet nobody doubts that there is a real standard of truth and falsehood. It may exceed our faculties to discover it in a particular instance ;—but we never question that it exists. In the same way, in the decisions of the faculty of Taste : There is nothing we differ about more than the merits of any given work of art,—a poem or a picture. Still, there are great lines and principles on which all agree ;—and which, in the progress of experience and cultivation, approximate to a sure standard. “ There is less dispute,” says Addison, “ about the merits of a description in Homer, than about the truth of a theory of Aristotle.” We may differ as to the comparative beauties of this or that author,—or the grouping and colouring of this or that picture ;—but no man of ordinary faculties will prefer a sign-post daubing to a Titian, or the Prince Arthur of Black-

more to the *Paradise Lost*. The determinations of Taste, like those of Morality, are susceptible of great improvement from cultivation ; and discussions on the one subject, as well as the other, proceed on the same principles, and appeal to the same tests, as those addressed to the Reason.

This analogical relation which our determinations in matters of Taste, and our determinations in matters of Morality, bear to the Reasoning Faculty, seems to throw some light upon both the former. I have considered this relation as yielding an inference that a standard,—or approximation to a standard,—is attainable in both ; and that this approximation will advance with the general advance of Reason. I shall proceed, in my next paper, to consider the same analogy in reference to the *Faculties* which judge in matters of Taste, and in matters of Morality.

LXXXII. FOUNDATIONS OF MORALITY.

Quid pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non.

HOR.

IN my last paper, I considered the question of a test or standard of our Moral determinations ; and enquired how far the principle of *Utility* constituted that test or standard. I further endeavoured to show that this principle is discoverable, like truth or falsehood, by a process of reasoning. But, it may be asked, is the *Faculty* then, which judges in Morals, a

mere modification of Reason? Is the emotion which we experience in determining the merit or demerit of an action, nothing else than that which we experience in deciding on the truth or falsehood of a proposition? When we contemplate an action of extraordinary baseness, or of heroic virtue, do we judge of it merely as we draw a conclusion from an argument;—merely on a cold inference, after due inquiry, that such actions injure or promote the general utility?

This leads us to the *second* head proposed for investigation, namely, the *Faculty* by which we form our Moral determinations. We shall begin the illustration of this subject by one or two examples.

We read, in Macchiavel, of Cæsar Borgia inviting several petty princes of Italy, to the city of Sinigaglia, under the most sacred promises of safety, confirmed by oaths;—and then deliberately putting them all to death, to serve a political end. We read, in Valerius Maximus, of Caius Toranius betraying a fond father to the proscription of the Roman triumvirs. We read, in Livy, of Scipio, when in the height of youth, passion, and power, restoring the Spanish virgin to her lover. We read of Regulus sent by Carthage to implore peace from his countrymen;—dissuading them from that course, as inconsistent with their honour;—and voluntarily returning to certain death, under the most cruel tortures, as the reward of his virtue.* Or,—to

* Atqui sciebat quæ sibi barbarus
Tortor pararet, &c.

The splendour of the subject has inspired Horace with an elevation beyond himself. His poetry, in this noble lyric, deserves a higher similitude than the *labours of the Matine Bee*.

take an example from the fictions of poetry,—we behold, in the Cinna of Corneille, a despotic prince, while master of the whole world, magnanimously forgiving a conspiracy formed against his life, by those whom he had loaded with kindness. In contemplating these opposite actions, is all the sentiment which we experience a mere conclusion of the understanding that one will obstruct, the other advance, the general utility ;—and hence a feeling of disapprobation towards the one, and of approbation towards the other ? Is it the same cool sentiment which we feel, on being satisfied, after due examination, that light consists of seven primary colours ;—or that Greece was colonized from Asia or Egypt ? Every one's experience must tell him that this is not the case. Our determination on the merit or demerit of actions, does no doubt involve a conviction as to their general benefit or injury to mankind ; but, besides this, there is a strong and agitating Emotion, altogether different from that cool assent, or dissent, with which we regard a proposition addressed to the understanding.

Whether we shall call this new mental power by the name of a *Moral Sense*,—a *Sympathetic Feeling*,—or by any other name,—seems immaterial. It is a mere dispute about words. But that there is some distinct Power or Faculty, which apprehends, and pronounces strongly, upon the merit or demerit of actions, —in addition to, or in corroboration of, Reason,—seems indisputable. But still, the inquiry into, and determination of, the question,—Whether an action be good or bad ?—appears to be conducted by the Understanding, according to its ordinary process of rea-

soning. Shall we say, then, that there is an *accessory Power*, which assists and enforces the determinations of Reason, in matters of Morality,—as well as in matters of Taste? Or shall we say, that these additional Faculties are wholly separate from Reason ;—and yet form their judgments in a similar way,—by induction from argument and proof?

The analogy between the mode of forming our judgments in Morals and in Taste, seems very strong. When there is any dispute respecting the beauty of a poem, or a picture,—how do we proceed to settle it? Precisely as we settle the goodness or the badness of an action,—or the truth or falsehood of a proposition ;—namely, by reasoning,—by proof,—by illustration, and inference,—by establishing its identity with, or resemblance to, some acknowledged standard of excellence. Yet still, something more than mere reasoning is required, to judge of the beauty of a poem or a picture. A man may possess a very strong intellect,—and be able to reason acutely,—and yet want that *something*. In like manner, a man may possess a very strong intellect, and yet be deficient in acute moral perceptions. Dr Bentley was unfortunate in the first want :—Macchiavel and Mirabeau in the second. It appears, therefore, in both cases, that although we investigate by means of Reason,—or by a process similar to that used by Reason,—into the merit or demerit of an action,—into the beauties or defects of a poem ;—still, there is, in both cases, an accessory Faculty, peculiarly fitted to apprehend those qualities which constitute the merit of the action, or the beauty of the poem.

If any one should object to this assumption of secondary or auxiliary Faculties, as gratuitous and unproved; and maintain it to be more philosophical to hold, that the Moral Sense and Taste are independent primary faculties,—which have the power of reasoning like the Understanding,—and conduct their inquiries into the objects of their apprehension, in the same manner;—with this doctrine, as already hinted, I have no quarrel. All that I contend for is, that while investigations in Morals, and in Taste, are conducted, (as far as appears), according to the ordinary process of Reason,—there is superadded a *sentiment*, or *tact*, different from any thing that belongs to Reason.

This view of the case seems to remove much of the objection commonly made to the theory of separate Faculties, formed to judge of Morals and of Taste,—namely, that they disown all settled tests or standards,—and make every one's own feeling the ultimate judge of the morality of an action, or of the beauty of a work of art. If those Faculties are accessory to Reason,—or conduct their inquiries like Reason,—they admit of a settled exterior standard,—and compare things with it by argument and inference,—just as Reason itself does. There is thus an equal probability of approaching to certainty in our determinations, in all the three cases. And as no one doubts that there is such a thing as Truth,—however difficult it may be to find it, in particular cases:—So there is as little ground for doubting that there are settled principles of morality, and of beauty,—though there may be a difference of opinion, in particular cases, on the merit of an action, or the beauty of a

composition. In none of the three Faculties is the standard of opinion absolutely certain ;—but as the cultivation of the human mind advances, that standard approaches nearer to certainty in them all.

There is one circumstance, indeed, which tends to pervert our determinations in Morals, more than those in Reason and Taste. The sentiment which decides, —or which accompanies our decisions,—in Morals, amounts more nearly to a passion, than any thing that occurs in the other two. Though the decisions of Reason and Taste are unquestionably sometimes influenced by habit, prejudice, feeling, or interest ; yet these influences become far stronger in our Moral determinations, and often disturb or mislead them in the most violent manner. Not to mention the perversions of religious and political rancour, we see, in the daily business of life, how apt men are to estimate the merit of all actions solely as they flatter their prejudices, or promote their own interests or desires. This renders it more difficult to obtain a fixed standard in Morals, than in Reason or Taste : —but leads to no just doubt that such a standard exists ;—or that time and culture will unfold it more clearly.

The *third* subject which I proposed to consider, was the question,—Why should I do good, and avoid doing evil ?—or the *Sanction* of morality.

The *first* and lowest inducement to do good, is that it generally promotes our private interest and advantage in this world. If the goodness of an action con-

sist in its utility to mankind, it is to be expected that mankind will favour and reward the person who so contributes to their welfare; and will discountenance him whose actions have an opposite tendency.

The *next* motive to goodness, is a desire of the approbation of mankind,—and a dread of their displeasure. This is one of the strongest principles of our nature,—independently of any actual benefit or injury to be received from our fellow creatures. It constitutes that regard for character and reputation, which makes us anxious for the esteem of mankind, even after we are removed by death from all possibility of profiting by it. On the other hand,—the disapprobation of our fellow creatures;—the sense of disgrace, and loss of character;—is generally found to be a suffering too great for the strongest mind to endure.

The *third* motive for doing good, is what has been called by ethical writers a *sense of duty*. This, though often blending with the two former, may be considered as quite distinct from them;—for it is a pleasure which may attend an action, never to be known beyond our own breast. It seems to consist,—partly of an instinctive delight implanted in our minds, by the Author of Nature, at the consciousness of doing good;—and partly of a sympathetic appropriation of what would be the sentiments of mankind, were the action known. The sense of unworthiness,—or self-reproach,—is the converse of this, in deterring from evil.

These seem to be all the motives for doing good,—and avoiding evil,—merely connected with this world. The Baron d'Olbach, after publishing his *Système de*

la Nature,—which has been termed a *Manual of Atheism*,—and which even shocked and disgusted Voltaire,—wrote a *Treatise on Morals*;—in which he attempted to show, that merely human motives were sufficient to preserve mankind from vice. He insists on those above enumerated,—particularly the last,—the sense of duty, fitness, and propriety,—which he considers, of itself, sufficient to influence a philosophic mind. Now, it may be true, that a man of education and reflection,—with moderate desires, and in easy circumstances,—may live a sufficiently moral life,—merely on the above motives,—and without believing in the existence of a Deity, or future state. There have been instances of this, in men who at least professed such disbelief. But in cases of deep misfortune,—of strong temptation,—of severe trial;—amidst the corruptions of prosperity,—the unaccountableness of despotic power,—the flattery of dependents,—the encouragement of faction,—the seduction of appetite,—the headlong grossness of ignorance;—in those situations where we are above or below the opinion of mankind;—where we are screened from their observation,—or cheered on by their blind support:—what security is there for human virtue, but the belief in an Omniscient Witness and Judge,—from whom nothing can be concealed or disguised,—by whom nothing will be overlooked, mistaken, or forgotten?

This, then, is the true, the only availing, *Sanction of Morality*. It is so far from counteracting, that it blends with and confirms all the others. These others, indeed, are nothing else than principles implanted within us.

by the Deity, to render obedience to his will more certain and more easy. "When the general rules," says Dr Smith, "which determine the merit and demerit of actions, come thus to be regarded as the laws of an All-powerful Being, who watches over our conduct; and who, in a life to come, will reward the observance, and punish the breach of them; they necessarily acquire a new sacredness from this consideration."

Dr Paley maintains the *Will of God* to be the *test*, as well as the *sanction* of Morality. But this seems to be an inaccurate mode of speech. Among the extravagances of human speculation, indeed, it has been maintained, that if God had commanded us to do *Evil*,—*Evil* would have been thereby transformed into *Good*:—And it has been further proclaimed, that it would be our duty to obey the will of God, though such obedience were to insure our eternal misery. But such speculations are absurd and unprofitable. There can be no doubt, in a sane mind, that what is good is the will of God,—and that God wills us to do only what is good. But still, we discover what is good,—not by a direct communication of his will,—(we are here speaking independently of Revelation)—but, by certain faculties and principles implanted by him within us. From these we obtain a test or standard, by which to judge of the merit and demerit of actions; and, having so obtained it, we infer the corresponding approbation or disapprobation of the Supreme Being. This, therefore, is properly the *Sanction*, not the *Test* of morality.

Nay,—even in judging of the Revealed Will of God,—it is altogether unsafe to interpret this Will, according to our fallible understanding, as the rule of Morality;—and to throw aside those principles and tests which we discover by the faculties which he hath implanted in our minds. It is a melancholy truth, that the most dreadful enormities have been committed, under the pretence,—nay, often under the mistaken belief,—of obeying the Revealed Will of God. What else has been the cause of those persecutions which have so outraged and profaned the spirit of Christianity? In our religious opinions,—as in every thing else,—we are bound to use that gift of Reason vouchsafed us by Providence. When we desert this guide, the errors of folly and passion break in; and pervert the benign communications of God to the destruction of his creatures.

But it is not alone in urging us to our duty that a firm religious belief is the great safeguard of virtue. It also supports us in the discharge of that duty. For, act as we will, seasons may arrive when the support of the world is withdrawn. Men may be ignorant,—they may be prejudiced,—they may be unjust. The virtuous man may be slandered,—misunderstood,—deserted,—persecuted. In such situations, what becomes of him whose hope is only of this world? Even the testimony of an approving heart,—the consciousness of good intention,—will scarcely bear him up against the opinion of mankind. But it is then, that the religious man clings to the rock of his assured hope, and perseveres in rectitude. It is then, that,—amidst the cla-

mour of numbers,—the deceitfulness of appearances,—the triumph of foes,—the desertion of friends,—and, hardest of all,—the mistaken suspicions of the good,—he looks forward to that time, when, under the eye of an Unerring and All-righteous Judge, his virtue shall be fully cleared, and shall reap its merited reward.

The result of the whole is this. That the *test* or *criterion* of the goodness of an action is its general *Utility*;—its tendency to the benefit of mankind. That this principle of *Utility* ought not to be considered (as it often has been by ethical writers), in contradistinction to an *Innate Sense*,—as if these were inconsistent :—Because both do exist ;—but are distinct from each other :—the one being the *Quality* which *constitutes*,—the other the *Faculty* which *apprehends*. That this *Faculty*,—whether wholly separate from Reason,—or accessory and subordinate to it,—judges by the same rules :—but, further, enforces this judgment by a strong *Emotion of sentiment*, different from any thing occurring in the determinations of abstract Reason. Finally,—that the only effectual *Sanc-tion* of Morality is the *Will of a Supreme Being* ;—the desire of his favour,—and the fear of his displeasure.

I have thus endeavoured to give a succinct view of a subject which has filled many learned volumes. Should my opinions be wrong, I hope that they may at least suggest some materials for thinking, which shall help others on the road to truth.

LXXXIII. FEMALE CONSTANCY — STORY OF
ESTHER CARUTH.

Te spectem, suprema mihi cum venerit hora ;
Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.

TIBULL.

I AM not sure if it be sufficiently known to the Worlds of Fashion and of Letters throughout Europe, that our Vegetable Market in Edinburgh was formerly holden in that part of the High Street, which stretches upwards, from the Tron Church, to the Royal Exchange. I deem it necessary to record this fact, as a movement has now taken place in the position of that ancient assemblage,—so that the remembrance of its pristine locality might otherwise pass away. We are now *accommodated* (in the phrase of Bardolph) with a spacious quadrangle, overlooked by the North Bridge, where the dealers in fruit, and culinary herbs, appear under smart covered booths, affording shelter from the inclement sky. Here, then, betimes in the morning, (particularly on Saturday, when two days' store must be laid in), you may,—if an early and curious observer,—see a comely range of carts arrive from the country, laden with cabbages, turnips, potatoes, and other vegetable ware : while, interspersed among those homely eatables, are flowers in pots and nosegays, to hit the taste of more luxurious purchasers. Of these cargoes, and their carriages, the masters are to be seen,—in the chill mornings of spring,—wrapped in loose great-

coats, and having huge worsted comforters about their necks,—with ruddy faces and cold hands,—here tossing down a truss of hay to their horses,—there swinging their arms across, to promote the vital warmth;—and, at another place, helping to convey the wares to the keepers of the little shops, by whom they are retailed to the denizens of the city. In the course of this traffic,—which commences as soon as the stores are delivered,—all the tropes and figures of that untaught eloquence with which Nature has endowed her humbler offspring (particularly of the softer sex) are to be heard, in their full vigour and variety. And as it belongs to a student of Nature to follow her through all her aspects,—the rude as well as the refined,—I sometimes turn my morning walk towards this quarter,—and disguise my real object under the pretence of buying a nosegay.

While I was passing through this mart, some time ago, I observed a decent-looking old man unloading a cart with kitchen vegetables, and near him a little boy, about six or seven years old, sitting on the ground, with a basket of flowers. I went up to the child, and inquired the price of his flowers; and being pleased with his modest and pretty looks, I asked his name. He answered, “Robin.”—“And have you no other name than Robin?”—“Aye—Robin Rule.”—“Where do you live?”—“Out by at Roslin.”—“And with whom?”—“Wi’ my grandfather.”—“And what’s his name?”—“Robert Caruth.”—“So you were called after your grandfather?”—“Aye.”—“And have you no father or mother?”—“No.”—“And do you be-

have well to your grandfather?"—" I dinna ken."— Here the old man, who had been employed on the other side of the cart, joined our conversation, and said,—“ He could answer that question favourably,—for Robin was a very good boy.”—I then asked about the child’s father and mother,—on which the old man sighed, and shook his head.—“ Ah ! Sir,—it’s a sad story that. His mother was my daughter, Esther Caruth ;—and, though I say it, a bonnier or sweeter young woman ne’er was seen in our parish. But a’ gaed wrang—and the birth o’ that poor bairn—and in short”——Seeing him hesitate, I said that I had no wish to make him speak of what was painful ; nor was this a time or place for a long story. But I should like to buy his basket of flowers ; and if he would bring round his cart to my house, after he had unloaded his vegetables, he might then,—if it was not distressing to him,—tell me his story at leisure, over a bottle of ale. To this he assented ; and some time after breakfast, as I was sitting with my good sister, the old man arrived. We made him bring his little boy, and his flower-basket, into the parlour. Judith provided the child with a mess of bread and milk ; and he was particularly tended by my nephew,—who, being a year or two older, assumed all the airs and patronage of a Mentor. The old man was seated, with his bottle of ale, near the fire, and proceeded with his story as follows :—

“ Your honour was making some inquiry after the parents o’ this poor bairn ; and I told you that his mother was my only daughter,—indeed only child.

In the place where we then dwelt, which is about twenty miles from this city, there lived a shopkeeper named Joseph Rule, who, though he had at first been nae better than mysell,—when I used to make my livelihood by renting a little garden,—at length became so prosperous, that he was held the richest man in our town. Few folks can stand sic a change, your honour,—and he was na ane o' them. He was puffed up wi' his wealth :—he forgot his auld friends :—and naething wad serve him but he wad breed his sons gentlemen. The eldest o' them, William, was born about twa years afore my Esther ;—and as comely proper a young lad, sir, to look to, as you wad see on a summer's day ;—and a sweet-conditioned clever lad he was besides. That bit bairn's as like him as he can look,—and indeed he's like my poor Esther too. Weel, sir,—they twa were acquaint frae their very childhood.—They got their schooling together. He used to come for her in the morning, and bring her back again at e'en. He helped her wi' her lessons at hame,—and indeed spent mair o' his time in my house than in his father's. Joseph was then humble like mysell, and made nae objection.

“ But the time came when he began to thrive. A brother died in the Indies, and left him a deal o' siller ;—and he drove good bargains,—and turned the penny on baith sides,—and took up a grand new shop,—and ca'd himsell a merchant. He then tried to stop the acquaintance atween my daughter and William,—but it was owr late. Their liking had grown stronger wi' their years. Being an honest weel-prin-

cipld lad, I had nae fears frae him ;—and they had been sae often together that we were used to it. But let nae man trust youthfu' hearts ovr far,—or lead them into temptation. Nane o' us can stand that,—least of a' the young ;—and we are commanded, ye ken, Sir, to pray against it. I was, may-be, wrang to let him come about the house sae often :—but I was mostly employed out o' doors ;—and they had meetings unknown to me. In short, Sir, I had nae suspicion of ought being wrang ;—and when my wife at last fand out that they had been ovr intimate together, it fell upon me like a clap o' thunder.

“ The lad, to do him justice, was ready to heal a' up by marriage ; and make my poor lassie an honest woman :—But auld Joseph was as dour as a rock ;—and swore a great oath, that if his son dared to disobey him, he ne'er should ha'e better frae him than a father's curse,—and that, Sir, is a fearfu' thing. The brothers, and the sisters, and a' the mis-proud kin, set upon the poor lad, night and day, and drove him to his wit's end. So he e'en ran away, and took on for a sodger.

“ From that time, my poor lassie never held up her head. She felt her ain grief and shame so sorely, that we couldna find in our hearts to blame her. She brought this boy into the world, wi' great pain and danger ; and that gied her health another blow, which broke the bruised reed. She wad have the bairn named after me, for she said I was the only parent he was ever like to see in this world. She suckled him at her ain breast, and seemed to live only in caring for him, and in thinking on the poor lad that was far

away. She would sit, for hours, at a little well, near the bottom of our garden, where the twa used to meet;—and hush her bit baby wi' a tune that Will and she sang when they were bairns. It was now the time o' war; and he was ordered wi' his regiment to foreign parts;—first to the West Indies,—syne to the Cape o' Good Hope,—syne to Spain. He had written Esther a letter, soon after he listed, promising that he wad be true-hearted, and love her till his dying day. But, after that, a lang time passed on without our hearing frae him. The reports that came, frae time to time, filled my poor lassie wi' unceasing fear and sorrow;—for she never could get at the truth. Sometimes it was said he was killed;—sometimes sorely wounded;—sometimes that he was discharged and coming hame;—sometimes that he was married, and settled, wi' a strange wife, in a foreign land;—and this I thought she took warst of a'. She behaved hersell sae weel, that, for a' that was come and gane, she had good offers of marriage, frae young men in our ain degree;—but she never wad hearken to them.—'No, no!' she said; 'there is but 'one man,' in this world, for whom I must live and die. '—If he prove false-hearted, wo's the time;—but I 'never can love another.'

“At length came the great battle of Waterloo, where mony a comely head was laid low, and mony a gallant heart was stilled. Will was there, fighting amang the rest. Where so heavy losses befel, it wasna easy to learn the fate o' every private man;—and we were perplexed by different reports and rumours, as before. At last we had sure accounts that poor Will

was sorely wounded (but in what way we didna ken),—and had been carried to the hospital, in some o' the towns thereabouts. Here he lay confined several months. My daughter wad fain have crossed the sea to take care o' him ; but, wi' much ado, we got her persuaded against it. We told her that he was weel cared for ;—that, after a lang and toilsome journey, she mightna get leave to see him ;—and that her poor auld parents, and helpless child, needed her cares at hame. We thus prevailed on her to stay ;—but so great was her trouble and distress o' mind, that I maist repented we didna let her gang.

“ We had, by this time, removed to the town o' Roslin, where I made out a sma' living by raising a wheen vegetables in our ain wee bit yard, for the market here. My wife was now sae frail, that she could do little for hersell ; and Esther, though ill able for it, had to take care o' us a'. Sitting ae night round the fire, near the end of October, a knock came to the door. I steppit out, and opened it :—and, by the light o' the fire, saw a man in a sodger's slop-jacket,—wi' a wallet at his back,—pale and sickly looking,—wanting a leg,—and supported on twa stilts. He was, to my sight, a perfect stranger ;—and asked, in a faint voice, ‘ If this was Robert Caruth's ? ’—I hadna time to answer, when a scream came frae the room within ;—and my daughter, rushing past, like ane dementit, cried,—‘ It's his voice ! —‘ It's his voice ! —I'm sure it's his voice ! ’—She caught hold o' his arm, and gazed in his face for a few moments.—Then, without saying a word, she clasped him about the neck,—laid her cheek on his bosom,—and

breathed out, in a faint sound, scarcely to be heard,—
'It's my own Will.'—'Yes, dear Esther,' said he, kissing her,—'I'm come at last,—after long toil and
'sore trouble;—but I doubt it's only to die beside you :
'—I'm a sad wreck now :—But how's the dear bairn ?'
'—Oh ! weel,—weel,—he's very weel :—come in—
'come in !'

"There was mony a kind embrace, and heavy sob, and bitter tear, that night. It was a sad change, in so few years, to see a comely youth broken down into a poor wasted cripple. The bit bairn was raised frae his bed, and Will kissed, and wept over him.—'Esther,' said he, 'it's but little time I've now to spare, —and little worth to give;—but I'm come at last to redeem my plighted troth. If you can accept what remains of me now,—sick and disabled as you see me,—you shall be declared my wedded wife, in the sight of God and man,—and that boy our lawful child. I've nae warld's gear to leave him;—but he shall at least have my blessing, and an honest name.' Esther could scarcely speak for her tears,—but she clasped him in her arms, and sobbed out that she loved him dearer than ever. She said no more than proved true.

"Why should I detain you, Sir, and this kind-hearted lady (for Judith's tears were stealing down her cheek), wi' lengthening a sad story. Poor Will's health had been worn out wi' change o' climate, and hard service, and the wounds he had received. He married my daughter, according to the law of our church; but outlived the holy rite only three short

months. His father, who had been humbled by misfortunes, came to see him ;—and they exchanged forgiveness. Esther attended him day and night ;—her affection only growing stronger as nature fainted and failed ;—and he breathed his last on her bosom. From that hour, she seemed as if done wi' this world. She begged that William's grave might be made wide enough to hold another. As long as she had strength, she crawled out every night, about the gloaming, to visit it, in the neighbouring kirk-yard. She drooped and pined away, without a complaint, or an impatient word ;—and in less than six weeks she was laid by the side o' her husband.

“ The last words she spoke were to recommend that poor orphan to my care ; and all I have now to pray for, is that I may be spared, wi' the auld goodwife, till we see him able to do something for himsell. Except for that duty, we have baith lived lang enough in this evil world ; and wad be weel content to join our poor daughter, where there is neither pain nor sorrowing, but happiness for the good, without end.”

As the old man finished his story, he brushed a tear from his eye, and rose to take his leave. He promised to come and see us, now and then, with his little boy, and basket of flowers : and having hoisted the child into his cart,—and gathered up the hay truss on which the horse had been feeding,—he gave the chirruping signal, and drove off.

LXXXIV. SCRIBLERUS REDIVIVUS.

CHAP. XXVII.

Report of further Proceedings of the COURT OF CRITICISM.

IT is not easy to describe the impression made on the town by the proceedings of the new COURT OF CRITICISM, by me so happily established,—a short taste or specimen whereof I lately put forth, in the form of a report of certain cases therein adjudged and decided. The reputation of the aforesaid court, and the public confidence in the rules and judgments passed therein, have so much increased, that business crowdeth in from all quarters, and the duties of this my office become daily more laborious. Nevertheless, I persevere, from a regard to the public good, (not however altogether forgetting the remuneration to be expected from the gratitude of my countrymen, hinted at in last chapter);—and now continue my report of divers curious and weighty cases which have occurred since my former communication.

Timothy Tomahawk, by trade a working critic, was charged on the suit of Sir Jeremiah Gentle, knight, with having wickedly, cruelly, and barbarously assaulted, bruised, wounded, belaboured, buffeted, and maltreated one certain harmless and inoffensive poem,—the lawful issue of the foresaid knight,—without injury or provocation, of any sort, had or received by the said Timothy;—to the grievous hurt and pre-

judice of the said knight,—breach of the king's peace,—and so forth.

The prisoner being called upon for his defence, at first pleaded privilege of *caste*, alleging that it was the nature of critics to devour and prey upon authors, as their proper food, (like spiders upon flies),—and that he only acted after his kind. But here I explained, that the laws and institutions of society had found it necessary to check and abate the propensities of the *feræ naturæ*, (witness the ancient Saxon laws against wolves):—and that, if in any case, these propensities broke out beyond the due *moderamen*, the transgressor would be punished, or at least bound over.

Hereupon the prisoner maintained that he had not exceeded the due *moderamen*;—that the poem was fair game;—that he had only mouthed and mumbled it a little, but found it too tender for the tooth;—and that so far from doing it any damage, he had tried to lick it into some shape;—and had materially improved it, and assisted the sale thereby.

This last fact rather appearing from the evidence;—and the prisoner, at the same time, offering to take two copies of the poem, at prime cost;—I recommended a nonsuit, which was pronounced accordingly.

The next case called on was one of great delicacy and importance,—being a competition for the prize of poetry, founded by the late Sir Homer Helicon, of Helicon Hall, in the county of Salop. The competitors were two ladies,—by name Mistress Anastasia Scroggins, and Mistress Seraphina Felicia Thunderbottom;—the first of whom had produced an *Amatory*

Eclogue,—the second, an *Ode to Despair*. The Judges under the will being unable to decide between these compositions, had referred the matter to this high court.

On the part of Mrs Anastasia, it was set forth, that she was known among her friends by the name of the *tenth Muse*;—that she had executed the *Eclogue* in her best style; and had no doubt of obtaining a verdict in her favour;—particularly as Mrs Thunderbottom's *Ode* was out of all rule,—wanting half an *antis-trophè* in the second part,—besides two feet short measure, and a spurious rhyme. To this Mrs Thunderbottom replied, in great heat, that the name of the *tenth Muse* had been given to her rival, in pure mockery and derision;—that her verses were mere milk and water, and did not deserve the name of poetry;—that, for her own part, she despised adhering to slavish rules; and never would allow her genius to be cramped by the trammels, divisions, and subdivisions, of ordinary writers. She then recited, with much energy, the concluding stanza of her poem, and called for a verdict in her favour.

I summed up the evidence, and unfolded the law, in the most impartial manner; and the jury being enclosed, the court proceeded to other business. But after several hours had elapsed, a message came from the jury, intimating that they were not likely to agree;—that a friend of Mrs Scroggins (to-wit, her tallow-chandler,) had got upon the jury;—had provided himself with a cold fowl, and nightcap;—and having eaten up the former, and drawn the latter over

his periwig, had laid himself quietly down to sleep,—telling the rest to waken him, when they were all of his mind. This being a new case, I recommended to the jury (by the crier, through the key-hole), to continue their deliberations ;—exhorted to unanimity ;—and intimated that when I returned to court next morning, I would have made up my mind how to proceed. Just as the court was rising, however, the jury came out ; and Mrs Scroggins's friend in the nightcap, being named foreman, announced a verdict in her favour ;—whereupon Mrs Thunderbottom protested against the whole proceedings, and declared she would move for a new trial.

Humphry Hack, a bookmaker by wholesale, was brought into court, on the suit of Ralph Ramble, gent., for that he, the said Ralph, having travelled in foreign parts, did, on his return, consign his notes and papers to the defendant, that he might reduce and redact the same into a Tour, or Book of Travels :—That said defendant,—not having the fear of God before his eyes,—and against the king's peace,—and the lawful duty of a literary drudge,—did presume to amend, amplify, pervert, transmute, and disguise, the facts so communicated to him, in such a manner, that the complainant did not know his own adventures :—That the defendant had made him pass through towns he never saw ;—had swum him over lakes,—tumbled him down precipices,—and shut him up in castles,—which had no existence in *rerum naturâ* ;—and had furthermore made him descend into vaults, caverns, and other suspicious places, unfit for any gentleman to appear in.

The defendant pleaded that the notes put into his hands were such mawkish stuff, that nobody would have read them, without a few touches and embellishments from his (the defendant's) fancy:—That, in consequence of his improvements, the book had sold well,—the facts been taken for gospel,—and the plaintiff noted, in all the reviews, for a judicious and observant traveller:—That, in fine, a suit would have been more reasonable, on his part, for the value of his amendments;—for which he hereby reserved his claim.

I explained to the jury that this defence could not be admitted;—that every man was entitled by law, in this free country, to be as dull as he pleased;—and that the defendant had no right to disfigure and disguise the plaintiff's lawful progeny by his beautifications. This sound view of the case, however, was not taken by the jury, who found for the defendant;—intimating, at the same time, that they thought the plaintiff was much beholden to him, and should allow him a share of the profits.

The next was an action of trover, on the suit of Abraham Pore, Esq. against Daniel Dithyrambic, of Paradise Row, poet and versifier, for recovery of *one shilling and four pence*, being the price of one certain rhyme or poem, intituled LYRICAL EFFUSION OF THE PROGRESS OF MIND, the work of the said Daniel. The plaintiff set forth, that he knew none but his own mother-tongue; and, (being advised to read poetry,) had bought the work aforesaid, with that intent; but, on opening the same, he found it written in a language with which he was wholly unacquainted,

—though bearing some distant resemblance to English ;—and, even where he could make out the words, the ideas were so cloudy, far-fetched, and unconnected, as to be wholly unintelligible to the plaintiff ;—so that he could make no use of the same, and had no lawful value for his money. He therefore prayed to have back the aforesaid price, so outlaid and disbursed by him ;—offering, at the same time, to return the poem.

The defendant made no other reply than by casting a look of ineffable disdain on the plaintiff, and desiring leave to read his poem to the jury. The paltry sum disbursed by the plaintiff, he averred, was so far from being adequate to its value, that every line, like Virgil's, should have had its purse of gold. As he proceeded with his reading, most of the jury fell asleep ; but, at the conclusion, they all agreed that, though above their comprehension, it sounded vastly fine, and very like what they understood to be poetry ;—wherefore they gave a verdict for the defendant, with *twenty shillings* costs.

The court was here interrupted by a noise from without, when a young man was brought in by the officers, who had been taken in his garret, in Budge Row, up four pair of stairs, in the very act of clipping, cutting, and defacing, certain current and sterling authors of this realm,—by name William Shakspeare, John Milton, Samuel Butler, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, and others ;—and again issuing the same, in parts and parcels,—far reduced below the standard purity,—to the cheating, defrauding, and cozening of his Majesty's lieges. At the same time were

seized divers implements of his unlawful trade, viz. scissors, paste, pens, ink, and so forth. Along with these, were produced in court, sundry plays, odes, elegies, stanzas, and heroic poems,—or parts and fragments thereof,—cut and mangled in the most cruel manner,—which strongly confirmed his guilt.

The proof being so clear, the unhappy youth had little to say for himself. He maintained, however, that he had a great and original turn for poetry,—although the malice of his contemporaries had not yet allowed it. That finding his own thoughts did not sell so readily, he had indeed looked into the works of some of his predecessors;—but if he had borrowed any thing, he had had the same thoughts in his own mind long before;—and indeed had improved them so much that they might pass for new.

Finding, on inquiry, that the youth was by trade a weaver; I condemned him to twelve months moderate labour at the loom,—with instructions to his master to treat him kindly, and feed him well;—but, on no account, to suffer a book, pen, or pair of scissors, to enter his hand during the period aforesaid. The lad complained loudly of the severity of this sentence,—but in so heinous a case, I could admit of no mitigation.

Here endeth happily my second report of the proceedings of the COURT OF CRITICISM.

LXXXV. ON THE SONNET.

Un jour, ce Dieu bizarre,
 Voulant pousser à bout tous les Rimeurs François,
 Inventâ du SONNET les rigoureuses loix :
 Voulut, qu'en deux *quatrains*, de mesure pareille,
 La rime, avec deux sons, frappât huit fois l'oreille ;
 Et qu'ensuite six vers, artistement rangés,
 Fussent, en deux *tercets*, par le sens partagés.
 Surtout, de ce poëme il bannit la license,
 Lui-même en mesura le nombre, et la cadence,
 Defendit qu'un vers foible y pût jamais entrer,
 Ni qu'un mot déjà mis osât s'y remonter :
 Du reste, il l'enrichit d'un beauté suprême ;
 Un SONNET sans défaut vaut seul un long poëme.

BOILEAU, *Art Poétique*.

IN the above passage, the great master of French criticism has laid down the laws of that species of short poem, called the SONNET ;—a poem invented and brought to perfection by the Italians, but seldom successful either in France or England. Indeed, so little is it known in this country, that few persons attach any other idea to the name, than that it means a short poem,—without any peculiar laws, either of length or structure. And such has been the execution of the specimens appearing under that title in our language, that the name of *Sonnetteer* has become proverbial for all that is contemptible in a worshipper of the Muses.

Yet the opinion of a nation so refined as the Italians,—possessing so noble a literature,—and with an ear so tuned to harmony,—is not to be lightly treated, in a question of this kind. That nation has produced

a Dante, an Ariosto, a Tasso ;—and yet, regarding with all pride and admiration those great models, it has not scrupled to place Petrarch nearly,—if not wholly,—on a level with them ;—and that chiefly on the strength of the Sonnets which form so large a portion of his works. This is the more remarkable, because the Sonnets of Petrarch have the blemish, not only of a tedious uniformity of subject,—but of frequent conceit and affectation. Those of Zappi, Bembo, Filicajo, and others, excel his, both in variety of subject, and in elevation of sentiment. But, with all these imperfections, the Sonnets of Petrarch are distinguished by such harmony, and finish of composition, that they have placed him, in the esteem of his countrymen, among the standards of their tongue ;—and by the side of poets whom all civilized nations unite in admiring.

The testimony of Boileau, in favour of this species of poem, is also of some weight. It is well known, that the prevailing bias of his mind was a bigoted admiration of the ancients ;—and superadded to this, was a low estimate of Italian literature. His insulting comparison of Tasso to Virgil is well known. And yet, in the face of these two prejudices, he gives the most lavish praise to a species of composition,—unknown to the ancients,—and the invention and boast of Italian literature. Neither was this predilection grounded on any success of his own countrymen, in this kind of writing ;—for he proceeds to say, immediately after the passage prefixed to this paper,—

Mais en vain mille auteurs y pensent arriver ;
 Et cet heureux Phénix est encore à trouver :
 A peine dans Gombaut, Mainard, et Malleville,
 En peut on admirer deux ou trois entre mille.
 Le reste, aussi peu lu que ceux de Pelletier,
 N'a fait, de chez Sercy, qu'un saut chez l'épicier :
 Pour enfermer son sens dans la borne prescrite,
 La mesure est toujours trop longue, ou trop petite.

Whether the celebrated Sonnet of M. des Barreaux, on the wickedness of his past life, had appeared at the time when the above passage was written, I know not ; but if it had, Boileau has done injustice to his country, in not making an exception of that noble production, from the above censure. It has been quoted with admiration by Addison, in the *Spectator* ;* and is, in my humble estimation, not only one of the finest Sonnets ever written, but the most fervent and elevated passage in all French poetry. It is called by Addison a *Hymn* :—But although the arrangement of the verses be not according to what I esteem the best model of the Petrarchian Sonnet, it conforms to the general structure of that poem as laid down by Boileau. It is as follows :—

GRAND DIEU ! tes jugemens sont remplis d'équité ;
 Toujours tu prends plaisir à nous être propice ;
 Mais j'ai tant fait de mal, que jamais ta bonté
 Ne me pardonnera, sans choquer ta justice :
 Oui, mon Dieu, la granduer de mon impiété
 Ne laisse à ton pouvoir que le choix du supplice :
 Ton intérêt s'oppose à ma félicité ;
 Et ta clémence même attend que je périsse.

* Spect. No. 513.

Contente ton désir, puisqu' il t'est glorieux ;
 Offense toi des larmes que coulent de mes yeux ;
 Tonne !—Frappe !—il est temps,—rends moi guerre pour
 guerre ;—
 J'adore, en périssant, la raison que t'aigrit :—
 Mais, dessus quel endroit tombera ton tonnerre
 Qui ne soit tout couvert du sang de JESUS CHRIST ?

One cause of our prejudice against the Sonnet, in this country, is the notion that it is confined to trifling amatory subjects. The poem above quoted gives a splendid disproof to this error. Many of those in the Italian and Spanish languages are on subjects of the highest sublimity ;—such as that of *Benedetto dall' Uva*, on the siege of Famagosta ; and that of *Herrera*, on the battle of Lepanto. I am disposed, however, rather to cite here that of *Zappi*, on the colossal statue of Moses, by Michael Angelo,—as I mean to venture on a translation of it, even after so great an Italian scholar as Mr Roscoe, who has quoted and translated it, in his *Life of Leo X.*

Chi è costui, che in duro pietra scolto
 Siede gigante, e le più illustre e conte
 Prove dell' arte avanza, e ha vive e pronte
 Le labbia sì, che le parole ascolto ?
 Quest' è Mose ;—ben mel diceva il folto
 Onor del mento, e'l doppio raggio in fronte :
 Quest' è Mose,—quando scendea del monte,
 E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.
 Tal era allor, che le sonante e vaste
 Acque ei sospese a se d'intorno ;—e tale
 Quando il mar chiuse, e ne fe tomba altrui :
 E voi, sue turbe, un rio vitello alzaste ;—
 Alzate aveste imago a questo eguale
 Ch'era men fallo l'adorar costui.

ON THE COLOSSAL STATUE OF MOSES.

What form is this, who, carv'd in stubborn stone,
 Sits like a giant in his strength array'd;
 With life and action so express portrayed,
 That his lips open, and put forth a tone?
 'Tis Moses ;—by his beard's thick honours known,
 And the twin radiance on his brow display'd :
 'Tis Moses ;—from the mount when late conveyed,
 And all the Godhead in his features shone.
 'Twas thus he look'd, when at his potent staff
 The waters rose ;—then sounding back return'd,
 And whelm'd the legions on th' Egyptian shore :
 And you, his crowd, who rais'd a golden calf,—
 Before this form had your oblations burned,
 Here it had been less impious to adore.*

Almost the only Sonnets of first-rate excellence in our language, (as far as I now recollect),—are a few by Milton ; and one by Gray, on the death of his friend Richard West. The ridiculous and malignant example cited from Milton, by Johnson, in his Dictionary, as a specimen of the Sonnet, (that of the *Tetrahordon*,—meant as a mere burlesque by its author), has united with his unfavourable comment, to increase the prejudice against this species of poem. Some of Milton's Sonnets, however, are extremely beautiful ;—particularly that on the threatened assault of London,—and the first of those addressed to Mr Laurence,—beginning “ Laurence, of virtuous Father vir-

* In the above translation, the *first* and *eighth* lines much resemble those of Mr Roscoe,—the *fifth* is exactly identical. Of this I was not aware at the time,—not having his poem by me :—But it is possible that an *unconscious* remembrance of it may have suggested the lines in question.

tuous Son," &c.—That of Thomas Warton, to the River Lodon, is also graceful and pathetic.

Some of our older authors have written numerous Sonnets, such as Shakspeare, Spenser, &c.—The great objections to these poems are, *first*, that they do not conform to the strict rules of the Sonnet, in the arrangement of the versification :—and, *secondly*, that they have generally no precise subject, and merely consist of a few melodious but unmeaning verses. This is too often the case with the Italian Sonnets; and has partly led to the contempt into which this poem has fallen.

But it may be asked, where is the use of this multiplication of difficulties ;—this creation, as it has been said, of *difficiles nugæ* ? Now, to this I answer, that there are cabinet pictures, as well as great historical compositions. There may be a fine single thought, as well as a succession of fine thoughts :—and, for a single thought, there is no more beautiful vehicle than the Sonnet. Besides having some confidence in the Italians, in matters of harmony,—I own that, to my ear, the music of the legitimate Petrarchian Sonnet is of the most rich and mellifluous kind. Its cadence is different from, but not inferior to, the stanza of Spenser. There are, I think, but two forms of the Sonnet which carry this harmony to its highest pitch. The first form is where the *first*, *fourth*, *fifth*, and *eighth* verses end in one rhyme :—the *second*, *third*, *sixth*, and *seventh*, in another ;—forming the two *quatrains*. And where, in the *tercets*, the *ninth* and *twelfth*—the *tenth* and *thirteenth*—the *eleventh* and *fourteenth* rhyme together. It is in this form that the above specimen from Zappi, and its transla-

tion, are written. . The second form of the Sonnet resembles the first, in the *quatrains* ;—but the *tercets* consist of six verses in alternate rhyme. It is difficult to say which of these forms is the most beautiful :—but no other, in my humble opinion, equals either of them.

The reason, therefore, for adopting the exclusive number and arrangement of the verses in the Sonnet, is not mere caprice,—but the harmony which arises from it. All the other strict laws laid down by Boileau apply equally to every short composition. In these, all careless or feeble writing is excluded ;—the repetition of the same word, at so short a distance, offends ;—and the most critical correctness of composition is required. In this respect, therefore, the Sonnet differs not from the Song, Epigram, or other brief poem. Thus explained,—if we cannot adopt the exaggerated encomium of Boileau,—that a perfect Sonnet equals in worth a long poem,—we may be allowed to term it the most beautiful form of a short one.

LXXXVI. SPECIMEN OF SONNETS.

—— Operosa parvus
Carmina fingo.

HOR.

MY last paper, containing a description of the Italian Sonnet, was designed as an introduction to several specimens of that poem, with which I intend now to present my reader. They were all written in former years, when I was open to the fascinations

of the Muse ;—and, in their composition, conform to the strict Petrarchian model, and to the rules laid down by Boileau. Each of them, too, possesses, I think, a specific and definite subject ;—a circumstance of essential importance in this species of writing.

The first contains a general allusion to the sentiments inspired by the approach of Spring.

SONNET I.

TO A FRIEND—WRITTEN IN SPRING.

O Friend ! when now the surly season flies,
 And new-born verdure shines on vale and hill ;
 And birds complain, and warbles every rill,
 And softer airs descend from purer skies ;
 Feel'st not the customary warmth arise
 Which calls us from the crabbed book and quill,
 To seek the plains, and wander where we will,
 As chance may lead, or purposed thought advise.
 Where shall we tempt the spotted fry,—or muse
 With pleasure on our Walton's* pastoral page,—
 And vacant lose the gently-rolling day ?
 Since Nature yields her gifts, but as we use,—
 Let us prevent the cunning stealth of age,
 And snatch the brief enjoyment while we may.

The next of these poems is connected with the close of the year. It was occasioned by hearing a Bullfinch sing, in the woods, near the latter end of October ; and although the effort of the little songster was made “ with slender notes, and more than half suppressed ; ”—yet the surprise was so pleasing as to call forth the following commemoration.

* Alluding to that delightful old book, Isaak Walton's Complete Angler.

SONNET II.

ON HEARING A BULLFINCH SING IN THE END OF OCTOBER.

Lone bird, who now, the fading woods among,
 Late warblest, as their honours disappear ;
 And keep'st awake the music of the year
 When all thy feathered kind have spent their song :
 Again the melancholy note prolong
 Which mourns thy play-time dropt into the sere,
 Thy jolly season fled, and Winter near
 To pinch thy side, and mar thy tuneful tongue.

Yet Hope survives :—When gloomy days o'erpast
 Yield to the glories of returning Spring,
 And peep the buds, and shine the blossoms fair ;
 I,—not unmindful of the parting blast,—
 Beneath this tree will number every wing,
 And watch thy coming with a lover's care.

The next Sonnet was suggested by a passage in the correspondence of Cowper, the poet. In a letter to Mr Unwin, dated 27th April 1782, he quotes the following Epigram :—

*Sors adversa gerit stimulum, sed tendit et alas :
 Pungit api similis,—sed velut ista fugit.*

After praising the dignity of the Roman language, in the above example, he pronounces it impossible to preserve its beauty in our degenerate tongue. Piqued by this defiance, I have made the attempt,—the last line of the Sonnet being a translation of the last line of the Epigram. How I have succeeded, it becomes not me to say.

SONNET III.

ON SOLICITUDE.

Why should we waste in anxious thought the day ?
 Or seek to know what future Fates betide ?
 Why ever-teasing doubts our soul divide ?
 And cares that drink the vital balm away ?
 Can human calculation, prone to stray,
 Through mazes unforeseen securely guide ?
 Or shield from harm our unprotected side,
 When fell Adversity demands her prey ?
 Since brief each wo and pleasure,—scorn to fear
 What turns thy shifting Fortune may advance ;—
 These oft confound our caution over-wise :
 Joy comes but for a moment,—and Mischance,
 Of kindred temper,—transient though severe,—
 Stings like the Bee,—but as it stings it flies.

The next poems may,—to borrow a denomination from the Greek Tragedy,—be called a *Trilogy*:—That is,—a series of three Sonnets,—made on three successive public events,—all of great importance,—and all following each other in rapid succession. They took place in the eventful year 1805. The *first* being the general renewal of war throughout Europe :—The *second*, the discomfiture of the Austrians at Ulm, and the surrender of that place to the French :—The *third*, the battle of Trafalgar, and the death of Nelson. It is remarkable that the *second* and *third* of these events,—(exhibiting the extremes of disgrace and of glory)—happened within one day of each other.

It may be added, that, in form, these Sonnets differ

from the examples already given,—inasmuch as, in each of them, the two *tercets* consist of six alternate rhymes. This is one of the two forms which I formerly noticed as the best.

SONNET IV.

ON THE GENERAL RENEWAL OF WAR, IN THE YEAR 1805.

Now in the sky of Europe thunders roll,
 And sanguinary mounts her fatal star ;—
 Faint echo murmurs to the din of war,—
 And mischief spreads apace from pole to pole :
 The nations burn with alienated soul ;—
 Opposing armies muster from afar ;—
 Grave councils issue plans to spoil and mar ;—
 Hope, Fear, and Vengeance agitate the whole.

Meanwhile, o'er thoughtless Man, the silent pace
 Of never-pausing Time moves quickly on :
 Pass some few years,—and vanish'd is the trace
 Of mighty feuds, and battles lost and won :
 Thus Heav'n redeems the follies of our race,
 And heals that comfort by ourselves undone.

SONNET V.

ON THE DEFEAT OF THE AUSTRIANS, AND SURRENDER OF ULM
 TO THE FRENCH,—20TH OCTOBER 1805.

The doom of Heav'n is past ;—and Europe, long
 The seat of social power, must veil her pride ;—
 One domination lords from side to side,
 Insulting,—in her foes' disunion strong :
 And,—unexempt, the fated wrecks among,—
 Must this proud land a victor's scorn abide ?
 Where heroes have achiev'd, and patriots died :—
 The land where Chatham rul'd, and Milton sung ?

No !—not the envy of a world combin'd
 Beneath one nod, our virtue shall inthrall :—
 What force can break th' unconquerable mind
 Of freemen, rising at their Country's call ?—
 They, in her lot indissolubly joined,
 Live with her fame,—or perish in her fall.

SONNET VI.

ON THE VICTORY OF TRAFALGAR, AND DEATH OF LORD NELSON,
 21st OCTOBER 1805.

Again we have prevailed ;—and cannons' roar
 Proclaims our triumph,—and our Hero's doom :—
 'Tis well :—such obsequies his fall become ;—
 And spread his fate round every sea and shore.
 Let no faint tears the precious loss deplore :—
 Destined to life, his valiant deeds shall bloom
 In spotless youth,—and flourish on his tomb,—
 Till Time have pass'd, and Britain rule no more.

Bravest and happiest :—on thy brow appear
 No doubtful trophies of ambitious fame :
 Living,—thy Country's guard,—thy merits here
 Combin'd the Victor's and the Patriot's claim :
 And dead,—her glory,—to thy bright career
 She points,—and kindles virtue at thy name.

The next Sonnet is an attempt to describe the appearances of nature on the approach of Evening.

SONNET VII.

TO THE EVENING STAR.

Soft star of Eve ! whose dim and vailed fire,
 Following the bright path of the Lord of Day,
 At his descent, unfolds a tremulous ray,
 Strengthening and fixing as his beams retire :

O gentle planet! ere that hour expire
 Which bounds thy sweet but transitory sway,
 Let me the fading form of things survey,
 And from the cares and crowds of man respire.
 How tranquil the deep vault :—the indolent breeze
 Comes o'er my senses with a cool delight :—
 Yet shines the west ;—and now, by faint degrees,
 Ling'ring thou fall'st :—the waters still are bright :—
 Gems twinkle on the darkening Heav'n :—the trees
 Grow black and dense :—thou sink'st,—and it is night.

The next was written in the bleak season of March ;
 at which period, tempted by some deceitful days of fine
 weather, a Violet had shown its untimely blossom.

SONNET VIII.

TO A SPRING VIOLET.

Violets dim,—
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,—
 That come before the Swallow dares,—did shrink
 Within their stiffened cradles, and refused
 The winds of March their beauty—

SHAKESPEARE.

It is not May :—Keep back, thou early gem :—
 Still in their cave the brooding tempests sleep ;
 Still lurks the Frost behind each shaded steep,
 Hardening her drops for Winter's diadem.
 Lock up thy folds within the taper stem ;—
 I hear the sound which bodes the whirlwind's sweep ;—
 I hear the forests vex'd, and raging deep ;—
 How shalt thou stand the wrath which conquers them ?
 Stay,—and be ruled :—Ere long a balmy wind
 Will steal o'er Earth,—and the rejoicing Sun
 Scale the bright Heav'n, and shed a warmer day.
 Youth errs, untutored,—in presumption blind ;—
 Then heed experience, ever wise to shun
 The coming ill :—Retire !—it is not May.

The last which I shall present is a strain of a higher mood. It was written on entering the valley of Glenco; and records the tragical and infamous deed which was perpetrated there, on the night of the 12th of February 1692*. The features of this scene are among the most savage and sublime, which ever came from the hand of nature:—but the association with the above event lends them an aggravated horror. It is only necessary to add, in explanation of an allusion in the poem, that, at the time of the massacre, the valley was choked up with snow,—amidst which several of the unhappy fugitives perished in the course of the night.

SONNET IX.

WRITTEN ON ENTERING GLENCO.

Ye aged hills, whose bare and rugged crest
 Hangs its deep shadow o'er this sullen vale ;—
 Around whose cliffs the towering eagles sail,
 Or guard with screams their solitary nest :—
 A silent gloom, approaching, fills my breast,
 And thoughts congenial to the spot prevail ;—
 But thoughts more dark,—more chilling glooms,—assail,
 Than e'er by Nature's mightiest forms impress'd.
 —For sudden Winter wraps the scene :—and lo !
 The startling shot resounds in Fancy's ear :—
 A pause of horror reigns :—Then shrieks of wo,—
 The murderer's shout,—the dying groan I hear :—
 Foul stains of blood pollute the printless snow,—
 And mangled trunks, and withering bones appear.

* The names and correspondence of all those concerned in this atrocious act,—from the Monarch who signed and counter-signed the order, to the Officers who carried it into execution,—are preserved in the Culloden Papers, p. 19–21. The orders were “ to put all to “ the sword under the age of Seventy,”—and *Thirty-eight* individuals actually lost their lives.

LXXXVII. MALE AND FEMALE ATTIRE.

Mille habet ornatus.—mille decenter habet.

TIBULL.

OF all despotisms, that of Fashion is the most absolute,—the most capricious,—the most unreasonable,—and the most willingly obeyed. The authority and virtue of a Trajan, or an Antonine, never commanded so ready a submission. To the mandates of this Power, the sturdy republican, and the supporter of divine right, equally conform. The fair sex here surrender the supremacy of their uncontrolled will. The old and the young,—the high and the low,—the wise and the foolish,—all yield their allegiance: and never think of a further reason for the behests of this arbitrary Autocrat, than the *hoc volo sic jubeo* of infallibility.

These reflections occurred, on occasion of the following small passage in my domestic history.

As I was going into the drawing-room, the other day, the door being a little ajar, I descried my sister Judith, and her friend Miss Primly, seated by the fireside. The latter held in her hand a Newspaper, which she was reading aloud; and as both seemed deeply absorbed in its contents, I was tempted to play the eaves-dropper, and overheard the following words:

“The Marchioness of Featherhead,—superb train of “*feuille-morte* velvet:—petticoat of silver tissue, under a “*demi-robe* of point lace, tastefully embroidered in festoons “of pearls and *fleurs de lis*, and looped up with silver

“ cords and tassels ;—*Corsage* of white-watered *Gros de Naples* ;—scolloped facings of pink satin, *en seduisante*,—
 “ alternating with *rouleaus* of emeralds : stars of sapphire,
 “ and *lozenges* of diamond. Rich edging of foil and *bouillon*, elegantly separating below the *bust*, and sweeping round, *à gauche*, in a tasteful *demi-cercle*. Sleeves *au double sabot* ;—Point lace, *chenille*, and *tulle*, folding round *en frivole* ;—with armlets of rubies and amethysts.
 “ The whole producing the most novel and astonishing effect. Superb coronet of diamonds, and plume of white ostrich feathers. We understand that this elegant *coiffure* was entirely invented and executed by Mesdemoiselles *Francoise* and *Friponniere*, of St James Street, London ; and of the *Galerie Vivienne*, Paris.

“ *Remark*.—Tuckers worn low :—Petticoats on the rise :
 “ —*Nude* at the neck and arms extending.”

“ Ah, how lovely !” sighed Miss Primly, as she lifted her eyes from the Newspaper :—“ Enchanting !—quite enchanting !”—responded my sister Judith.

Not choosing to disturb the ladies at their conference, I retired to my library ; and began to ruminate on that important, and hitherto neglected, part of my duty, which regards the censorship of *Dress*. It is not for want of hints from many correspondents, that I have fallen into this omission. One worthy citizen, who dates his letter from the High Street, complains that his two daughters cost him more in *pelisses* than used to keep his father’s family in meal and malt. Another remonstrates on the quantity of rings and jewellery worn by his wife ; and declares, that, when decked out, you might take her for the favourite concubine of the Great Mogul. A third, who is an elderly spinster, of a dragon reputation for virtue, asks

me, with suppressed indignation, if I am to wait with my reproofs till women walk about the streets as naked as mother Eve, before the fall?—with a sly *innuendo* that their *fall* can be at no great distance, if they do not mend their manners. A fourth, who seems to be a splenetic old gentleman, enlarges on the extravagances of his own sex, in the article of dress; and submits to the impartial, whether any remnant of humanity exists in the aspect of those creatures whom we see sliding and simpering about the streets,—with their necks stuck fast in the pillory of a shirt collar,—their waist compressed into the tenuity of a wasp,—and their legs covered by trowsers which might include a beer-barrel. By such, and many more reproaches, have I been assailed, to whet my blunted purpose;—so that I can really defer it no longer. It has, however, neither been indolence, nor indifference to the subject, which has kept me silent, till this time; but, on considering the matter philosophically, I thought that there was something to commend, as well as to blame, in the forms of dress which have recently prevailed among us; and I was at some loss how to shape my censure, so as to reach the excesses and aberrations, without touching what is good. In the following remarks, I will try to reconcile this difficulty; and intend to treat the subject with perfect seriousness and candour.

I begin, then, as in duty bound, with the more amiable half of our species, who have been suspected (I am not sure, if justly,) of the greatest frailty, in regard to dress. That women should pay more attention to dress than men, is proper; and therefore no fit subject

of reproof. As their forms are more beautiful than those of the other sex,—a concern for that beauty,—and an attention to its preservation,—are not only natural, but laudable. Indeed, I consider a total disregard of dress, in a woman,—or any approach to the habits of a sloven,—as a certain indication of some defect or inelegance in her mind. Then, the domestic pursuits in which women are chiefly engaged,—and the absence of greater cares and employments,—render an attention to ornament becoming in them, which would be frivolous and degrading in the other sex. And as the thoughts of women are thus more naturally turned towards dress,—so they have a finer and juster taste in it (as in many other things) than belongs to our sex.

The form of female attire which prevailed in this country, several years ago, was, I think, the most graceful and becoming that has been used within my remembrance ;—and for this plain reason, that it most exactly corresponded with the natural shape of the person. It came very near that of ancient Greece, as we see it preserved in those exquisite remains of art which have descended to us from antiquity. In that wonderful people, the faculty of Taste,—the perception of what is graceful and beautiful,—seems to have been as perfect as those of Intellect and Valour ; and in matters of taste, the justness of their views appears no less in the most ordinary departments of dress and furniture, than in the nobler arts of painting, sculpture, and poetry.

All the absurdities and *monstrosities* which have prevailed in female ornament, have consisted in attempts to alter the natural shape and proportions of

their form :—that is,—to alter that shape, and those proportions, which Nature designed as the most suitable to her fairest work. Sometimes towering loads were heaped upon the head ;—sometimes vast protuberances enlarged the other end ;—sometimes the waist was bandaged into unnatural length and tenuity ;—sometimes the feet tottered on lofty heels. All these excesses have predominated at different times ; and have incurred the ridicule or indignation of censurers, from the days of Juvenal to those of my predecessor the Spectator. These enormities were discarded in the late forms of female dress which prevailed with us ; but I grieve to say that the love of the unnatural (that indelible propensity in human kind) has again revived. Even the merit of setting off the charms of its wearers, has been unable to shield from innovation the former *costume*. The waist,—instead of being bound with the *cestus* of the robed graces,—has now spindled into the form of a fishing-rod : and, in further imitation of the false taste of Charles the Second's age, the sleeves have swelled out to dimensions truly elephantine. I cannot but add my reclamation against the late grievous shortening of petticoats, and excision of the flowing train ; which (independently of other considerations) take all grace and dignity from the female form ; and degrade a fine woman into a smart-looking opera-dancer. The truth is, that we have been here perverted, (as in most matters of this kind,) by the example of our gay neighbours across the channel,—with whom smartness, activity, and *espièglerie* are every thing ; but who have little notion of the *graceful*, in any branch of art or behaviour. With the exception,

indeed, of their literature, the French have shown little perfection,—so far as peculiar to themselves,—in any thing with which taste is conversant ;—in dress,—in furniture,—in architecture,—in sculpture,—in painting,—or in music. They are fond of flutter, exertion, violent effect, and artificial glare,—and are unawake to the charms of simplicity, dignity, and repose. The Parisian *Maitre des Graces*, teaching the statue of the Antinous to hold up his head, and turn out his toes, is a type of the taste of his nation. But of this our British fair may be assured,—that, till they resume the Grecian zone,—the lengthened and flowing garments ;—they never can reach that noble air,—that goddess-like dignity of movement,—that *vera incessu patuit Dea* (a quotation which their admirers must interpret, as a test of their love and learning), which characterizes a fine woman.

Let me not, however, be undistinguishing in my censure. While I regret what is lost,—let me approve what is retained. Our fair ones still walk on the level of their own feet, and braid their hair in its native glossy ringlets. This is much to one who remembers the lofty heels which propped up the female steps,—and the hideous aggregation of flour and tallow with which the head was loaded,—in the bygone age.

To turn my regards to the dress of my own sex,—I must remark—that, here also, the example of the French has led us males as far astray, as it ever did our fair countrywomen. The ordinary dress of a British or French gentleman, is now,—and has been for more than a century past,—the most ungraceful, ever devised by the wit of man. Not to go back to

the *toga* and *chlamys* of the Romans, (which John Kemble so classically familiarized on our stage);—or to the fine flowing dresses of the eastern nations ;—I will merely refer to that of England, during the sixteenth century, in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, as we see it in the portraits of Holbein),—and ask any unprejudiced person, if we have had a form of male attire, since that time, at all to compare with it ? It was nearly that of the Spaniards ; and continued till the reign of Charles I. It then assumed the form, usually called the Vandyke Dress, from appearing in the portraits of that great master. Still, however,—the falling ruff,—the scalloped edging,—and the flowing cloak or mantle,—were not unbecoming,—and continued till the Restoration ; when the fashions of the court of Lewis XIV. were introduced into England, by Charles II. and his courtiers ; and have prevailed, with little alteration, to the present day.

When I speak of little alteration, I allude to the general design ;—for of small changes there have been no want. But in these, it strikes me that there has been a poverty of design, and barrenness of invention, highly discreditable to the *arbiters* of our mode. They have been able to invent nothing, for many years, which is not imitated and surpassed, by every city apprentice, and attorney's clerk, before the revolution of a week. One cause of this is the small cost of the materials. In the days of velvet, embroidery, and point lace, a gentleman in full dress would have *burned* for a matter of Two hundred pounds :—Now, the most finished *Exquisite* would be dear at Twenty.

I cannot, therefore, but propose it as a noble object of ambition to some of our votaries of fashion, to discard such piddling innovation ;—and come forth with something rich in value, and rare in form :—To appear, for instance, at a drawing-room, or birth-day, in the *costume* of a Roman patrician ;—or at least assume the slashed doublet, and hat and feather, of the days of good Queen Bess. As for the *mustachio*,—in a well-looking youth, of dark complexion, it is not amiss ;—but among us fair-haired children of the north,—and under the grisly locks of age,—it is an abomination *.

It is curious to remark, how some forms of dress have slipped into fashion, to favour the appearance of one class of society, and some of another. About a century ago, the old,—conscious of the ravages of time,—had the art to reduce all ages to a level, by covering the head with enormous masses of artificial hair. Even after this fashion had gone out, the arts of the *friseur*, and the disguise of powder, kept up a tolerable show of equality. But now, the youngsters have turned the tables, with a vengeance. All aids and deceptions are abolished. And the pates of seniors stand contrasted with the juvenile clustering locks, in all the helplessness of baldness and grey hairs.

How the fair sex contrive this matter, it is not for me to conjecture. But, to all outward appearance, the hand of time falls innocuous on their heads; and grandmothers exhibit the sable or auburn of fifteen.

And yet, with all my preference of the ancient

* The singularly ungraceful forms of dress, which prevailed in Hogarth's time, have contributed to that air of *vulgarity* which is the great blemish in his style.

English attire, it was not without its censurers ;—the excesses of the beaux, then as now, calling down the indignation of sober livers. “ Neither was it merrier “ in Englande,” says old *Harrison*, “ than when an “ Englishman was knowne abroad by his own clothes; “ and contented himself at home with his fine carsie “ hosen, and a meane slop: his coate, gowne, and cloake, “ of browne, blue, or puke, with some prettie furniture “ of velvet or furre, and a doublet of sad tawnie, or “ blacke velvet, or other comelie silke; without suche “ cuttes and gawrish colours as are worne in these “ dayes; and never broughte in but by the consente of “ the Frenche, who thinke themselves the gayest men, “ when they have most diversities of jaggess, and “ change of colour aboute them.”

In like manner, good *Barnaby Rich*, in his *Honestie of this Age*, breaks out into the following indignant interrogation :—“ From whence cometh this “ weaving and this embroidering of long lockes ;—this “ curiosity that is used amongst men, in frizzling and “ curling of their hair ;—these gentle-woman-like “ starcht bandes,—so be-edged and be-laced,—fitter for “ maid Marian, in a morris-dance, than for him that “ hath either that spirite, or that courage, that should “ be in a gentleman ?”

These worthy old censors, however, seem to touch chiefly on certain subordinate excesses or improprieties,—without affecting the main object of my commendation.

Thus much in the general. I may hereafter advert to some minor delinquencies, which seem to require a word in season.

LXXXVIII. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

Veniam damus, petimusque vicissim.

HOR.

THE spirit of intolerance in matters of opinion, is a sentiment at once the most natural to the human mind, and the least reconcileable to reason. However much we may think ourselves interested in the truth of any subject of our belief, the agreement or disagreement of others, in that belief, can neither make it more true nor more false. Still less, can such agreement lead to any presumption of truth, when it is enforced by compulsion. Yet, in matters of belief, depending on moral evidence ;—which admit not of the certainty of mathematical demonstration ;—so much is our confidence in any truth increased by the agreement of others ;—that we are alarmed and offended by any difference of sentiment from our own ;—and indeed feel an imaginary security in the concurrence of our species, even when we know that it has been brought about by force.

Dr Smith has illustrated the above distinction in the different grounds of our belief, by remarking how much more one class of men are affected by opposition of sentiment, than another, —according to the nature of their studies, and the test of truth, or of merit, by which these are tried. Mathematicians, who can establish their speculations on demonstrative evidence, are, he observes, tolerant of opposition, and little af-

fects by the dissent of others from the truth of their doctrines: While artists, and men of letters,—the excellence of whose works is determined only by the uncertain standard of Taste,—feel the most lively sensibility to the general voice, and an extreme jealousy of all difference of opinion, on the merits either of their own works, or those of others*.

But there are matters of still higher moment to mankind than those of Taste and Literature. Politics and Religion,—those things which concern our happiness in this world, and our fate in the next,—such are the objects which most deeply engage the feelings of our species, in all civilized communities. And as the truth of our opinions, on such subjects, is incapable of being brought to the test of mathematical certainty,—and admits only of moral conviction,—we are here the most anxious for the concurrence of mankind, and the most impatient of dissent from our opinion. Every one who thinks otherwise than we do, on such matters, furnishes an instance of a mind not satisfied with that evidence which convinces us;—and thus, in so far, throws a doubt on the sufficiency of that evidence. In the ordinary spirit of intolerance which prevails among mankind, various other passions and interests no doubt concur;—particularly the greater chance of attaining some desired object, by the union of opinions upon it:—But the above seems the foundation on which the sentiment rests.

In modern times, the spirit of intolerance has abated in Religion, and shown itself chiefly in Politics.

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, part iii. chap. 2.

This last manifestation of the passion, however, is seldom so pure and unmixed as the former : for in Politics it is blended with the subsidiary motives already hinted at,—views of interest, and competition for power. In such great convulsions and revolutions as have unhappily distracted our times, these latter motives probably stimulated the actors, on all sides, more than mere intolerance of opinion. And even in those who looked on from a distance,—a sympathetic horror at the atrocities committed,—and a fear of their infection spreading elsewhere,—added much to the abstract disapproval of the principles themselves, as being founded in speculative error.

Political intolerance is seen more genuine and sincere in the underlings of a party, than in those who move at its head :—partly because the former have less sense to control their feelings,—and partly because they have fewer occasions to meet, and make mutual allowances. It is amusing, indeed, to one who retains any right of independent thinking, to remark the total incapacity of impartial judgment,—the surrender of all ideas of right and wrong,—which characterize the retainers of a party, in regard to every thing connected with the authorized standards of belief. They can conceive of nothing as good or evil, but in so far as it promotes or retards the views of their friends.

It is a favourite doctrine with zealots of this stamp, that all moderation in politics proceeds from lukewarmness to the public good. They have no esteem for such indifference ; and prefer a bitter opponent to a

moderate friend. They maintain that every side must be right or wrong ; and that all should chuse according as they think of either. To this they add a favourite dogma transmitted from the states of antiquity, that in public differences none should be permitted to remain neutral.

Now, in certain great emergencies,—such as foreign invasion or domestic conspiracy ;—in measures which affect the existence or well-being of his country ;—it is true that no good citizen will remain neutral. In the little stormy Republics of ancient Greece, almost every citizen had a sensible influence on state affairs ; and in their simple uninvolved politics, and unstable governments, measures were every day occurring which affected the safety of the whole. But in the more settled and complicated relations of modern states,—and in the ordinary course of civil government,—so little do the measures of one party differ from those of another ;—so doubtful is the tendency of political proceedings, either to great good or great evil ;—so seldom is any party right in all things, or wrong in all ;—that it is neither necessary nor possible for an upright and rational man to pin his faith to any.—On every other subject, one who seeks to form a just decision hears both sides ; and generally finds the truth to lie between. The opinion of one under the influence of interest, prejudice, or passion, is thought good for nothing. And why, in regard to public affairs,—and these alone,—truth should not be sought in the same way,—is not very apparent.

A universal division into parties has another evil

consequence,—that there remains no unbiassed tribunal, by whom public measures may be judged of, or public character estimated. This takes from statesmen the greatest encouragement to good, and check on evil. In factious times,—however ill a man may act, he is supported by his friends ;—however well, he gets no credit from his enemies. He is thus both confused in his own notions of what is right ; and loses all regard for the impartial opinion of others,—that great preservative of human integrity. This important function of judging belongs to the general body ; and in order to discharge it well, they must keep themselves in some degree neutral. Public measures are attacked and defended before the public, by those who are immediate actors on the scene ;—and this tribunal, in proportion as it is impartial and enlightened, becomes a powerful and safe control. It pronounces, by anticipation, the judgment of posterity. The conclusion from the above premises may be expressed in the following maxim ;—that it is useful to have parties in a state ;—but not to have the whole state divided into parties.

The greatest errors and evils, both in Religion and Politics, have proceeded from exaggeration of opinion, and excess of feeling. The best frame of mind, in regard to both, is moderation.

It is some comfort to reflect, that political contentions are softened by the progress of civility and refinement. Those animosities which did, in former times, among us,—and still, in barbarous states, do,—lead to civil war, and private bloodshed,—now evaporate in

a change of ministers, verbal abuse, caricatures, and pasquinades. At Constantinople, when any thing goes amiss in public affairs, the general dissatisfaction is announced by a few bullets discharged through the windows of the Seraglio, and a demand for the grand vizier's head. When M. de Calonne was removed from the ministry by Louis XVI., the Turkish ambassador at Paris inquired where his head was stuck up,—thinking this a matter of ordinary etiquette on such occasions.—“O! please your Excellency,”—said the lively Parisians,—“he never had any.”—And in this *bon mot*, (which the honest Turk probably did not understand) they had full amends of their minister, for all his misdeeds, real or imaginary.

The spirit of intolerance in Religion has also abated much of its zeal, as well as ferocity, in modern times. This has arisen from the progress of reflection;—for nations cool by reflection as well as individuals. This hath taught men two things. *First*, the unreasonableness of denying to others that freedom of thought which they claim for themselves. And, *secondly*, the unimportance of those minute points, on which Christians differ,—compared with the great principles in which they agree. It was an exaggerated view of this matter which caused those religious persecutions that have dishonoured Christianity, and given the strongest handle to its foes. A difference on a point of metaphysical belief,—in itself incomprehensible to the human mind;—or on some form of mere external observance;—was thought of such moment as to risk the salvation of mankind:—and thus was at-

tributed to a Being of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness the blind and passionate prejudices of his erring creatures.

Acting on such opinions, the most atrocious crimes were perpetrated, in the name of a religion which breathes only gentleness and peace: nor can there be any doubt that this prostitution of its principles has afforded the most powerful of all the weapons used by infidels against it. Had Christianity never degenerated into corruptions and persecutions, there would scarcely have existed infidelity. Neither, (it is painful to remark,) was the spirit of persecution confined to the prevailing sect, from which the others seceded at the Reformation. It unhappily distinguished all of them, in turn, as they happened to be vested with power. Nay, in one respect, it was more inexcusable in the reformed than in the original church. The Roman Catholic belief was the first, and long the only rule of faith. It had the authority of ancient establishment; and was fortified by all the bulwarks of worldly influence, splendour, and power. It moreover disowned the authority of human reason; and claimed the submission of its followers to an infallible standard, against which it was impious to appeal. This church, therefore, was at least guilty of no inconsistency in enforcing its rule of faith by persecution. The reformers, on the other hand, had emancipated themselves from this thralldom, by an express appeal to human reason:—Yet, after having done so, they prohibited all further recourse to the same tribunal. No sooner had they fixed their scheme of faith, than they fenced it

round by a strict intolerance ; and prevented others from applying to their doctrines the same test which they had themselves successfully applied to those of the church of Rome. They, in their turn, proscribed all opposition ; and enforced their faith with a cruelty not inferior to that from which they had escaped. The judicial murder of Servetus by Calvin, deserves a place beside the atrocities of Mary of England, and the Duke of Alva.

The reflection is somewhat mortifying,—to whom, and to what, we owe the commencement of the Reformation in England. The man was Henry VIII,—and the motives, caprice, violence, cupidity, and despotism. His quarrel with the Roman Pontiff about his divorce ;—his thirst for Ecclesiastical spoil ;—his impatience of all dissent from his own capricious opinions ;—these combined stimulants made him send, with impartial atrocity, Romanist and Heretic, in the same hurdle, to execution :—but all this doubtless ended in breaking up the Popish hierarchy. The poet has, indeed, beautifully assigned another motive for his conduct, which,—if not more rational, when applied to such a subject,—is at least more amiable :—

When Love could teach a monarch to be wise ;
And Gospel light first dawned from Bullen's eyes.

The truth is, that the idea of toleration scarcely existed, during that age, even in the minds of those who suffered most from its want. It was truly persecution against persecution. The oppressed did not complain of the injustice of being denied the exercise

of their private opinion. They only lamented that they had not the power to inflict on others what they were themselves enduring. The universal error lay in overrating the importance of certain minute speculative points of faith ; and in thinking that, even if error prevailed, the way to get the better of it was by compulsion.

Amidst this common fury of a bigoted time, two splendid exceptions occur, in two of the greatest of that age of great men ;—William I. Prince of Orange,—and Henry IV. of France. The former was distinguished by such virtues and endowments, that I scruple not to add his name, as a *seventh*, to that *Sextumvirate* of Worthies whom Swift holds up with a defiance to mankind.* In that noble document named his APOLOGY,† there is the following passage, unfolding the grounds of a rational toleration, with a wisdom and temper, equally rare, in that age, among Romanists and Reformers. “ I confess that, in the “ Council of State, I made all the opposition in my “ power to the persecutions that were proposed,— “ partly from motives of humanity ;—partly from my “ conviction of the absurdity of punishing men for “ opinions which they could not change, when they

* See Gulliver's Travels, Voyage to Laputa, &c. The *Sextumvirate*, to whom he maintains that the world cannot furnish an associate, are Socrates, Epaminondas, Brutus the elder and younger, Cato, and Sir Thomas More. But if the stories told of the persecuting intolerance of the latter be true, they show how far inferior he was to William, in rising above the spirit of his age.

† See Watson's History of Philip II. Appendix.

“ did not disturb the public tranquillity ;—and partly
 “ from a persuasion that the violent remedies employ-
 “ ed were calculated to disappoint the end in view.”

The other instance is that of Henry IV. of France ; who,—however beset with failings,—and short of the prudence and moral perfection of William—possessed a generosity, sweetness, and gaiety of temperament, which form one of the most attractive characters in history. The following letter has been preserved,—written by him at the age of twenty-four,—when still a Protestant,—and struggling for his maternal dominions against the powerful and perfidious court of France. It is addressed to M. de Batz, a Roman Catholic, who had offered Henry the use of his chateau, as a place of strength. Some of the courtiers entertained suspicions of this offer from a papist : but the noble-minded Henry recoiled from such a thought. I give the letter, in the ancient language and spelling, as printed in M. Grimm’s correspondence. . It is not unworthy of a place beside the letter of Anne Countess of Dorset, to Secretary Williamson, so much praised by Horace Walpole.

“ Combien que soyez de ceux-la du Pape, je ne avez,
 “ comme les cuydyés, mesfiance de vous, dessus ces choses.
 “ Ceux qui suivent tout droict leur conscience, sont de ma
 “ religion : et moi, je suis de celle de tous ceux-la qui sont
 “ braves et bons.”

The above two illustrious men both fell by the knives of assassins, the victims of religious intolerance.

LXXXIX. NEWSPAPERS AND ADVERTISEMENTS.

Quicquid agunt homines—nostri est farrago libelli.

Juv.

This folio of four pages,—happy work !
Which not even critics criticize.

COWPER.

AMONG the features of our times, none is more remarkable than the increase of Newspapers. The keen interest excited by a period of wars, and political changes, lasting for almost half a century ;—the turns and events of every passing day ;—the rumours evermore springing up, decaying, and reviving, through all that time ;—nourished such an appetite for news,—and diffused it so widely,—that the providers of that commodity found a demand for their ware almost insatiable. Accordingly, the Newspapers now circulating in the British dominions, are, I suppose, greater in size and number, by a hundredfold, than they were at the accession of George III.—and the readers have multiplied in a still larger proportion.

If we look near two centuries further back, we find the single and solitary *English Mercury* published in 1588, as a Government Gazette, when the nation was agitated by the fears of the Spanish *Armada*. And, even in Cromwell's time, London only afforded the *Mercurius Politicus*, published once a-week, on four small ill-printed pages. It is singular to contrast this state of things with the multifarious issue of the modern newspaper press.

That the sum of good, arising from this change, has, on the whole, overbalanced the sum of evil, I am willing to believe;—and this, I fear, is the best we can make of most worldly advantages. As far as a communication of true intelligence is procured, the effect is clearly beneficial. By this rapid process, distances are, in a manner, shortened,—seas dried up, and mountains levelled;—and the world is united into one community. Thus, not only is knowledge diffused; but a wider audience is assembled, before whom all actions are performed, and to whom all the actors are accountable;—and hence there arises a greater incitement to virtuous, and a greater restraint from unworthy, deeds. The decisions of this crowded tribunal are, to be sure, not always very just, nor very easily ascertained. Nevertheless, the sense of its presence,—and the anticipated terrors of its displeasure,—come in aid of the **MAN WITHIN THE BREAST**;—and enforce the dreadful impartiality of his still and solemn voice.

In a political view also,—and towards the good conduct of civil government,—this aggregate of public opinion,—with all its uncertainty,—all its passion,—and all its mistake,—is still the best control which we have over the rulers of mankind.

But when we look on the other side of the picture, a few deductions must be made. If it should happen, that in these publications,—instead of a cautious regard to truth,—we find facts misrepresented by carelessness or design; and opinions discoloured by the most violent aggravation:—If every action be praised

or blamed, solely as it happens to serve the views of a party :—If clamour and misconstruction be so loud,—and every act of public or private conduct be so blazoned and perverted,—that men shrink from doing good, as well as evil, lest it be turned to matter of reproach against them :—If the most wild and intemperate notions be inculcated,—and the bitterest passions stirred up,—among those, who know just enough to make them susceptible of the poison, but too little to provide the antidote :—If, in this way, it happen, that the blessings of Education, now so widely diffused, are perverted into an instrument to mislead, corrupt, and inflame :—If these,—or such as these,—be among the fruits of this modern Tree of Knowledge which so widely overspreads our land,—the testimony which I have given in its behalf will not be thought too limited or cautious.

But to turn from such grave considerations to the mere account of pleasure,—it cannot be denied, that the interest and occupation drawn from the daily reading of Newspapers, by all classes of the community, is of no ordinary value. The philosophical Dr Paley declares that the enjoyment he reaps from this single source, is cheaply bought by all that he pays in taxes. And many worthy individuals are to be seen going about the world, who have truly no other principle of thinking,—scarcely indeed of vitality,—but what is daily blown into them from the columns of a Newspaper. Till the hour of post, they are mere chaotic matter,—and swallow down their breakfast as mechanically as a decanting syphon :—but as they

get through the papers of the day, you see them gradually expand and brighten ;—till, by the afternoon, they are really very conversable discreet sort of persons.

I am not sure whether the benefits derived from our change of system have been so unmixed, to some of the lower classes of the people. In former times, the transit of news, among them, was chiefly conducted by word of mouth. The little peddling merchant, or wandering beggar, brought accounts of what was passing in the world. The village politicians assembled to hear him,—when “ news much older than their “ ale went round :”—and these were mingled with social tales and sports, at the stated meetings, or occasional pastimes, of the neighbourhood. Whether the exchange of this cheerful intercourse, for Newspaper reading, and incessant angry politics, be altogether on the side of happiness, may admit of serious question.

But, however this may be, it cannot be denied that the contents of a newspaper are invaluable to the idlers and loungers of upper life ; and exhibit a variety adapted to all tastes, however nice :—politics for the ardent,—wit for the gay,—novelty for the curious,—scandal for the ill-natured,—new discoveries for the scientific,—criticisms for the learned,—strange stories for lovers of the marvellous,—royal airings and banquets for the fervently loyal,—town-talk for coffee-house loungers,—court dresses for the ladies,—and fashionable arrivals for the admirers of high life. As for the *Advertisements*, properly so called, I formerly ventured on a slight commemoration of their splend-

ours and marvels, as exhibited in our intellectual city ; and I now (for the benefit of my readers), perform an act of heroic self-immolation, by contrasting it with the inimitable sketch of the poet of *THE TASK*.

The rest appears a wilderness of strange
But gay confusion ; roses for the cheek,
And lilies for the brow, of faded age ;
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
Heav'n, earth, and ocean plundered of their sweets,
Nectarious essences, Olympian dews,
Sermons, and city feasts, and favourite airs,
Aerial journeys, submarine exploits,
And *Katterfelto*, with his hair on end,
At his own wonders wondering for his bread.

This summary of the ordinary notices and advertisements of a newspaper brings to my remembrance certain communications of a like nature, which have been addressed to me, from various quarters, (some a good way off), by persons who so far mistook the dignity of my calling, as to confound these my lucubrations with the vulgar contents of a newspaper. Nevertheless, as I am naturally of the most milky and compliant disposition, I will for once gratify those inconsiderate persons, by publishing a specimen of their wants and offers :—hereby however intimating, that, as they forgot the small ceremony of payment, when they lodged their notices, they must at least have the grace to stand between me and his Majesty's Stamp Office, in case of after question on the score of duties.

" LITERATURE.

" *Mr Jeremy Allwork*, a person of genteel connections, and regular education, proposes setting up a *Literary Repository*, for the convenience of the public at large, and authors in particular ; where Treatises may be had, ready made, and of the newest pattern, on all subjects, and of all sizes, from a Quarto to a Pamphlet. Also assists authors in their studies ; and gives advice in preparing their compositions for the press. Engages to listen for any length of time, without yawning, at a reasonable rate per hour. Has also on hand a neat assortment of Introductions, Conclusions, Digressions, Episodes, Reflections, Hints, Innuendos, and Parentheses—all of superior quality, and adapted to every topic,—which he disposes of, on sale, loan, pawn, or exchange, on the most favourable terms. Also a great choice of *Rhymes*, single and double,—good specimens of *Blank*,—*Similes*, warranted like, &c. &c.

" *N. B.*—Compliments and Condolences done up on the shortest notice. Handsome discount on large orders."

" AFFAIRS OF THE HEART.

" *Mrs Matchem*, a lady of sensibility and experience, is willing to give advice to persons of both sexes, on *Affairs of the Heart*. Is provided with great store of hints, in cases of Inconstancy,—Opposition of Parents,—small *Faux Pas*,—Lovers' Quarrels,—and the like. Can bring the most satisfactory testimonies to her skill in arranging or breaking off Matches,—attracting or reclaiming Lovers,—and disappointing Rivals.—Gives private lessons to grown Gentlemen, how to proceed in the case of Heiresses, which have been found successful in the most desperate situations :—also

will show an infallible method of dissolving unpleasant entanglements,—however far gone,—without the least loss of character. Emolument is no object :—but to prevent troublesome applications, a small gratuity will be accepted.

“ Private rooms, for bringing parties together,—more or less darkened :—waiting-maids of approved secrecy. Also makes up all sorts of dresses, for disguises, &c. The strictest honour may be relied on.”

“ BIRTHS, &c.

“ Last night, at a quarter past twelve, in the chapel of St Stephen, Westminster, the *Lord Viscount Noodledum*, son and heir-apparent of the most noble the *Marquis of Dumnoodle*, was safely delivered of his maiden speech,—to the great joy of the noble family. The *labour* was long and severe,—and the symptoms exceedingly unfavourable. We are happy, however, to announce that his Lordship is, this morning, doing as well as can be expected.”

“ TO THE FACULTY.

“ A Medical Practitioner, of high respectability and connections, being engaged to go abroad with my *Lord Linger*, will treat on liberal terms with any gentleman, who would wish to succeed to his practice, in the thriving town of *Evergroan*. The situation eminently attractive ;—with a beautiful eastern exposure, and marshes to the south. Will introduce to a genteel and extensive circle of patients,—many of a hypochondriacal turn. Also engages to leave, at his departure, a fine going *Typhus* and *Dysentery*,—very favourable to a beginner. Letters post paid will be duly attended to.

“ Also, the good will of an Apothecary’s shop ;—and a wholesale connection with the established house of *Pound-*

well and *Poison'em*, London. A share in the Undertaker line may be had, if required.

“ *N. B.*—Several nervous unmarried ladies, of good fortune, in the neighbourhood.”

“ TO GENTLEMEN OF FORTUNE.

“ A gentleman going abroad wishes to part with a Young Lady,—perfectly amiable,—having no farther use for her. Is of a fine height and figure,—good action,—and every way qualified to suit a gentleman of fashion. Has a little turn to expense,—and now and then a trifle hot in the temper,—but quite safe and agreeable, when used to her. Would make an excellent wife, if required ;—but has no objection to a less particular arrangement, with a gentleman of honour and liberality.—*N. B.* Sings like an angel,—and not difficult of getting acquainted.—Also a grey poney, and gig with harness.—One concern.”

“ LOST ;

“ On Friday evening the 16th inst., when returning from dinner, the heads of a Speech on the State of the Nation,—intended to be delivered, in the Honourable House, on Tuesday the 10th June proximo ;—full of profound views,—of use to nobody but the owner :—With references to Parliamentary Register,—Hatsell’s Precedents,—and Blackstone’s Commentaries.—One quotation from Cicero,—good as new.

“ Likewise, sketch of a Bill, by ditto, on the Game Laws, making the eating of hares, grouse, partridges, pheasants, &c. in all but qualified persons, felony without benefit of clergy,—on summary conviction before two Justices. Also, a *Rider*, to permit qualified persons,—in close time, when sport is slack,—to hunt and shoot Poachers, wherever found ;—to the great furtherance of decency, order, and

good morals among all classes of the community:—With a clause for the discouragement of nocturnal poachers, declaring, that, from the month of January to December, inclusive, it shall be holden and deemed dark night, from five o'clock afternoon, till ten next morning;—any almanack or dial to the contrary notwithstanding.

“Whoever shall return the above papers to William Wiseacre, Esq. M. P. for the county of ———, will be handsomely rewarded. And if any one,—after this public notice,—shall presume to vend, utter, extract, copy, publish, or otherwise use the same,—he shall be deemed guilty of a breach of privilege of the Honourable House,—and dealt with accordingly.”

“WANTED;

“By a genteel family in Grosvenor Square, London, a Footman, to match. Must be five feet ten inches high, without his shoes,—well made,—fresh complexion,—good teeth,—dark hair and whiskers,—genteel air and walk;—to match with another of the above description,—to go behind a carriage, or before a lady's sedan chair. None need apply, unless he is perfect in the fashionable rap,—ties his neckcloth well,—and is able to walk at least twenty miles, in a forenoon, through the streets, delivering cards or messages. Must also be clever in a crowd, at the Opera, or evening parties. Good encouragement will be given to a young man of real talents and figure.

“*N. B.*—The lady, being particular, examines all her Footmen herself.”

XC. CONVERSATION ON DREAMS.

Cum prostrata sopore
Urget membra quies, et mens sine pondere ludit.

PETRON.

I WAS lately tempted by the invitation of my friend Mr Worthy, to leave the heat and confusion of the town,—the *fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romæ*,—and spend a day with him, at his country seat, among the coolness of the shades and breezes. There is, at this blooming season of the year, a sort of restless disposition towards gaiety,—a sympathy with all rural objects and pleasures,—which seems to belong rather to the animal than to the intellectual part of our nature; and bestows an enjoyment the more pure that it neither hesitates, nor reflects, nor compares. The prospect of a mountain,—the glance of sunny waters,—the melody of birds,—the perfume of shrubs and flowers,—the ruffle of the balmy west-wind,—these,—all or singly,—are sufficient to fill the mind with a sensation approaching to delight; and must be put down to the supernumerary bounty of Providence, which thus provides for us a source of pleasure neither to be resisted nor explained.

At my friend's house, I found one or two persons of agreeable manners, and improved understanding; and although we were all very ignorant of horses and

cock-fighting,—and made few remarks on the news or the weather,—we yet contrived to support the conversation to our mutual satisfaction.

What is still more singular,—we were drawn from the pleasures of the bottle, after dinner, to taste the sweetness of the evening air, and admire the landscape under the declining sun. We first directed our walk to the garden, where nature appeared under the strict but useful discipline of art. We admired the delicate green of the young leaves,—the variety of colours in the flowers,—and the richness of the blossoms on the fruit-trees. The regularity of the parterres,—and the trimness of the walks and borders,—produced that indolent complacency, with which the mind reposes on agreeable and uniform objects of still life; and I could not help feeling the propriety of assigning such an abode to *retired leisure*.*

We descended, by the bottom of the garden, to the channel of a rocky stream, which rises in the mountains, a few miles off; and, after an irregular course, joins a larger river below. At one time, we beheld it gushing in a rapid and confined current;—at another, tumbling down in cascades;—while the lofty banks, on either side, broken into precipices, seemed ready to close above our heads; and created such a gloom, that, though yet early in the evening, the bat was flitting among the branches, in pursuit of his prey. After walking some time in this twilight, we mounted a warm slope, facing the west, upon which the sun had

* Milton's *Penseroso*.

settled his rays, as he was slowly descending towards a chain of mountains which terminated the prospect. Here we resolved to pause, and await his departure. We threw ourselves on the grass, and enjoyed, for some time, in silence, the surrounding prospect. Below us, lay the bed of the stream which we had just left,—at some places hidden by the jutting rocks or copsewood,—at others disclosing a broad pool, or the foam of a cascade. Through the cliffs on the opposite side,—and where the stream winded out further down,—we had a view of the distant country, varied with cultivation, hills, and woods. The prospect, up the valley, to our left, was more confined by the bold features of the ground ;—but, at one place, opened so far as to discover a new turn of the stream ;—close to which, a cottage was betrayed by the smoke curling from its roof, and scarcely yielding to the faint breeze which expired on our faces.

Meanwhile the crows were urging their flight homewards overhead, and the larks were dropping into their nest. The thrush and blackbird still made the echoes ring with their clear and mellow pipes ;—and the bark of a dog was heard, at times, as he gathered the sheep to their evening fold. To those intermitting sounds was joined the continual fall of the water, which diffused a pleasing languor through the soul, suited to the stillness of the scenery around.

As we lay here, enjoying the beauties of the prospect, our discourse gradually wandered to the subject of DREAMS ; when one of the party, Mr L. remarked, that he scarcely ever dreamed at all.

“ Why, Sir,” said Mr S., “ that you do not recollect your dreams, may be true enough :—but that you do not dream at all, I can scarcely believe. When you happen to awaken suddenly, at any period of the night,—are you not always sensible of something having, immediately before, employed your thoughts ;—and this,—how often soever you may awaken,—and at whatever hours ?”

While the first speaker began to task his recollection, to answer this appeal, Mr S. continued ;—“ I think, that any one who attends to his own impressions will find this to be the case. And, indeed, thus far at least, the phenomena of Dreaming seem not very difficult of explanation. It is now generally agreed, that the succession of thoughts through the mind, in our waking hours, follows an unbroken chain ; and is regulated by certain laws of connection or association, according to which the preceding always suggests the succeeding idea. It is true, that this chain may be somewhat influenced by the will ;—and that it is perpetually broken in upon, during our waking hours, by impressions on the senses. But, if you were to shut yourself up in a dark room,—and remain, for some time, in total silence and seclusion,—allowing your thoughts to run on at liberty ;—this would just form a reverie, or waking dream,—and would approach nearly to that state, into which we fall, when we go to sleep. Having thus brought our connected chain of thought to the very verge of sleep,—why should we doubt that it just goes on,—after that change,—in the same manner,—and subject to the same laws,—as be-

fore :—With this distinction,—that the influence of the will,—and the interruptions from external objects,—are then both suspended ?”

“Nay, but surely,” said Mr T., “you do not make sufficient allowance for the difference between our modes of thinking, when asleep, and when awake. In sleep,—the faculties show a vigour, and activity, and pliancy, far beyond what they possess in our waking moments. What invention !—what fancy do we exercise in our Dreams ! We contrive a series of adventures,—compose poems, histories, songs, systems of philosophy.—We people our scenes with numerous characters.—We hold long conversations, in which we devise thoughts and words, not only for ourselves, but for every one present,—without so much as being conscious of an effort. No :—I am so far from resembling my friend L., in not dreaming, that I consider the hours passed in sleep as the brighter half of my existence.”

“You are supported,” said I, “in these notions, by great authorities, both ancient and modern. They hold that the mind enjoys her powers in a higher perfection, when unencumbered by the earthly partner. But this, I own, seems to me an idea taken up without due reflection. If we adopt Mr S.’s analogy between the train of thought, in sleep, and in waking reverie ;—I think we shall find, in the latter, something very like that involuntary power of invention, so much boasted of in Dreams. And in both,—the rapidity of thought,—so far from being a proof of the mind’s

strength,—is rather, I suspect, a proof of its weakness. For, after all, this exercise of invention comes to be nothing more than a mere shadow, or outline ;—the whole substance, or solid creation, being left unfinished. In a waking reverie, we often imagine ourselves to be composing a poem, or a system ;—or devising a conversation among several speakers :—but all that we truly invent amounts to a mere sketch of the general import ;—or, at most, to the fixing of one or two detached parts. But the substantial detail, or filling up, (which is the real difficulty of invention), remains untouched. I believe that the case is little otherwise in Dreams. And could we fix down either creation in writing, exactly as it arose, we should find how little had been substantially invented.”

“ I must needs confirm this doctrine, by my own experience,” said Mr W.,—who has given the world some favourite pieces of poetry.—“ You know, I am a dabbler in rhymes ;—and many have I concocted in my sleep :—But, on awaking, they either evaporated in nothing ; or turned out such scurvy affairs, as not to be *presentable*. The only thing that would ever stand perusal, was the concluding stanza of an address by a lover to his mistress, who had forsaken him for a richer rival :—As a natural curiosity, you shall hear it :—

The pride of state,—the pomp of art,
Thou’lt gain, if such can move thee :—
But thou wilt lose a faithful heart,
That never ceased to love thee.

“ The invention of the verses was accompanied by that of a simple and plaintive air, adapted to them :—But neither reached above mediocrity.”

“ Why, truly,” said Mr M.,—an enlightened lawyer,—“ I should be much inclined to agree with you, as to the general want, both of value and precision, in our sleeping inventions :—But there are odd enough exceptions ;—where one would almost think, that the mind, in sleep, not only received very precise communications,—but actually received them from others, and did not invent them herself. For instance,—I dreamt, the other night, that several persons, who were jointly interested in a lawsuit, came to consult me, at my chambers. One of them acted as spokesman for the rest,—and began to tell me the case,—while I took notes of what he said. Near the commencement of his story, some circumstance escaped me ;—but, hoping that this might be supplied by the after narrative, I forbore to interrupt him, for some time. I was, however, disappointed. He did not repeat the fact omitted : and, for want of it, I felt that I could not understand him. So I stopped him, and begged that he would re-state what I had lost. He did so :—and I then clearly saw its application,—and understood the whole case. Now, if this part omitted was all my own invention, like the rest,—this was a strange circuitous way to bring it out. I was so much struck with the process, on awaking, that I immediately noted down the whole circumstances, while fresh in my recollection.”

“Well, my good friends,” resumed Mr L., “under your pardon, all this is mighty trifling ;—for I again repeat, what I set out with, that I never Dream at all ;—or next to none. My longest Dream does not fill up so much time as the words I have now spoken.”

“You will surely grant, Mr L.,” replied I, “that your waking hours are constantly employed with one train of thought or another. Now,—suppose you were to set about recollecting every thing that has passed through your mind since you awoke this morning,—how far back could you trace the links?—At the same time, the faculty of calling up such past impressions,—whether sleeping or waking,—may vary in different individuals.”

“But surely,” said Mr D.,—“there is still an important difference between our mental operations, asleep and awake. In these two states of existence we neither think nor feel in the same way.”

“Why, Sir,” said Dr G.,—a very intelligent physician,—“the change induced by sleep, on the bodily and mental functions, still remains a mystery, both in medicine and philosophy. One or two leading facts are all that we have been able to gather. Of these, the first that strikes us is, the suspension of the operation of the Will over such functions, both of mind and body, as are commonly subject to its power. Its influence over the train of thought,—which is considerable while awake,—appears to cease altogether in sleep. As to the bodily functions, those which are performed involuntarily, while awake,—such as breathing, circulation, digestion, secretion,—go forward, with equal re-

gularity and advantage, in sleep. But the movements of the limbs,—which obey the Will while awake,—are, in sleep, wholly withdrawn from her government, and remain suspended.”

“But, my good Doctor,” said Mr D., “how can that be,—when people often walk, run, write, and speak, in their sleep?”

“The phenomenon of *Somnambulism*,” replied the Doctor, “forms an exception to the general rule,—and is not easily explained :—But, as to the truth of the rule, in ordinary cases, you cannot doubt, when you consider what business you do,—what long walks you take,—how much you use both your legs and your hands,—in Dreams,—without ever stirring from your bed.—Or, if you have a favorite dog or cat,—you may see them pursuing their prey or diversion in sleep,—while their limbs remain bound up, as in a cramp or palsy.”

“One of the most signal changes, Doctor,”—said Mr Acid, who was present,—“which our faculties undergo in sleep, seems to be the total extinction of the *Sense of Wonder*,—of that expectation of the continued course of nature, which is so strong, in our waking hours, that we consider any departure from it as miraculous. This peculiarity in Dreams, does not arise from any defect of memory, or forgetfulness of the course of nature ;—for no such thing happens. Yet we every moment behold, in Dreams,—without surprise or discomposure,—and with a full conviction of reality,—such monstrous deviations from the laws of nature,—nay, such incongruous or impossible com-

binations,—as, if presented to our waking sense, would fill us with consternation.”

“ There is this however to be observed, Mr Acid,” said our host, “ that the objects which appear to us in sleep, are perhaps not so properly compared to the impressions of sense, as to the conceptions, or successive fictions, of a waking reverie. Now, in these last, it is not uncommon to fancy pretty odd combinations,—to build strange castles in the air,—without feeling any surprise at their deviation from the course of nature.”

“ But in such creations of the waking thought,” returned Mr Acid, “ there is, I suspect, little or no belief of their reality. As our meditation is more or less deep,—as our fancy or feelings are more or less warm,—such fictions may assume a stronger or weaker colouring ;—but still we never mistake them for real objects of sense. Whereas, the objects with which we are engaged, in Dreams, impress us with the same entire conviction of their reality, as those do, which meet our senses, while awake, in the material world. Were there not, therefore, some change in our sense of the marvellous, when asleep ; I do not see why monsters appearing to us then should fail to raise our special wonder ;—in the same manner as they would raise it, if presented in our waking hours.”

“ There seems to be much truth in Mr Acid’s remark,” said Dr G., “ as to this change in our sense of the marvellous, during sleep. What other changes occur,—or what faculties are enlarged, abridged, or suspended,—it is not easy to say. Indeed, till more

facts be noted, we can go but a little way towards a perfect Theory of Dreams. That the reasoning and comparing powers do then continue, in some strength, seems to be true ; but the operations of the mind in sleep are chiefly confined to repeating the impressions of sense. We gaze and listen, more than we reflect or reason. It is also generally allowed that our sleeping thoughts take much of their colour from the state of our body ;—being agreeable, or otherwise, as the body is at ease, or in pain.”

Mr B., who had hitherto remained silent, now observed, that although Dr G.’s last remark was generally true, a singular enough exception to it had occurred to himself. “ I had gone to bed,” continued he, “ with an acute headach, which kept me awake for some time. At length I fell asleep, and presently found myself walking down a grassy slope in a garden, where all around me was sunshine, verdure, and fragrance. I held by the hand a beautiful child, of two years old,—whom, to complete the enchantment, I fancied my own. The child made a false step, and would have fallen ;—but swung round by the hold which I kept of his hand. Though not hurt, he was frightened, and began to whimper. I caught him up in my arms, and kissed him :—then, to divert his distress, I pretended to slip, as he had done,—and, with an antic gesture, gradually and gently threw myself backwards on the turf,—still holding his face opposite to mine. The child was so much tickled at my imitation and gestures, that he fell a-laughing through his tears. With this image before me,

—perhaps the loveliest in all nature,—I awoke. I had slept about two hours; and the pain under which I fell asleep, I found undiminished; and so much of the same kind, and in the same spot, that I had reason to think that it had never abated. But so agreeable was the impression left by my Dream, that it lasted for some time after I awoke, and almost balanced my bodily pain*.”

The Sun had now disappeared, and the shades of evening were closing round. He had sunk amidst a gorgeous train of clouds, whose edges were tinged with his brightness. This had been succeeded by a glow of crimson over all the western horizon, which was now fading into a sickly red:—while the vault above us by degrees lost its azure in the colourless hue of evening. Although the air had still much of its Summer mildness, yet the breeze which swelled, and crept up the stream, reminded us that we belonged not to the regions of the South, and warned us that it was time to retire.

* This last instance,—as well as those cited by the Poet, and the Lawyer,—are from actual experience;—which indeed forms their only value.

XCI. FORENOON VISITING.

Nam omnes plateas perreptavi—
Sum defessus quæritando,—nusquam invenio.

PLAUT.

No rattling wheels stop short before these gates ;
No powder'd pert proficient in the art
Of sounding an alarm assaults these doors,
Till the street rings.

COWPER.

It is somewhat curious to reflect on the different degree of importance attached to persons and things, in their own age, and in after years. The operation of time is twofold,—sometimes enlarging and sometimes diminishing ;—or, to use the expression of Horace, *It digs up the obscure, and hides the splendid*. Men, who figure in their own day, dwindle into nothing in the eyes of posterity ;—while others, who are scarcely observed by their contemporaries, become objects of admiration to future times. The noted instance of Cromwell's Secretary of State, Whitlocke, writing about *one Milton, a blind man*, illustrates both parts of the remark.* This worthy

* Another instance occurs, in the Memoires of the Marquis de Dangeau, an insipid courtier of the days of Louis XIV, who thus commemorates the death of the great Corneille :—" 5th " *Octobre* 1684.—On apprit, à Chambord, la mort du bonhomme " Corneille, fameux par ses comédies. Il laisse une place vacante " dans l'Academie." This is much as if a courtier of James I. had written,—“ We have heard to-day of the death of that good " body Shakspeare, the play-writer. He makes a vacancy at the " Mermaid Club.” The courtly Marquis figures somewhat better in his obituary of Racine ; but then the poet was a regular frequenter of Versailles.—“ 20 *Avril* 1699.—Le pauvre Racine mourut

placeman would doubtless have regarded it as a mighty indecorum, if any one had spoken of him, or his affairs, as on the same foot with those of the blind man. Yet have he, and his kindred, and his possessions, passed into oblivion ; while posterity records, with reverential fondness, every successive mansion, in the crowded lanes or smoky alleys of London, which was sanctified by the residence of the first of Poets. Indeed, whatever may be a man's claims on the score of genius, these can scarcely contend, in his own lifetime, against the splendours of rank and fortune by which he is surrounded. But, in the lapse of years, those adventitious glories decay. Personal qualities survive and brighten. And the character of an illustrious man (contrary to the principles of physical optics) enlarges as you recede from it.

In the same manner, events assume a very different importance, in the eyes of contemporaries, and of posterity. The petty rivalry of two women led to the elevation of the Commons of Rome, and hastened the fate of the Republic. The mighty preparations for the Crusades, which were expected to change the face of the world, ended in nothing. So did the encroaching power of Charles V., Louis XIV., and Bonaparte ;—all of which, in their turn, menaced the independence of Europe. Domestic events, the most trifling or unnoticed in their day, rise into importance when their consequences become visible to after times.

“ à Paris. C'était un homme d'un grand mérite, et illustre par ses ouvrages. Il travaillait à l'histoire du Roi. Il était de l'Académie Française. Je n'ai jamais connu d'homme qui eût autant d'esprit que celui-là.”

If Adam Smith had not been recovered from the gypsies, by whom he was stolen when a child, we should have had no *Wealth of Nations*. When Virgil came poor and friendless to Rome,—and (as is conjectured from his Epigram) wandered about the streets, all night in the rain,—he would have thought himself,—and been thought by others,—the luckiest of men, to get the post of a little tide-waiter at Baiæ or Tarentum, which would have divorced him from the Muses for ever :—yet that seems a small matter, in the eyes of posterity, compared with having or wanting the *Æneid*.

We are not, therefore, to judge of the interest which will be taken by our descendants in any person, object, event, or usage, merely by its importance in our own eyes. Many things which use renders to us familiar and insignificant, may have great attractions for them. It is to gratify this laudable curiosity of future times,—and withal to impress them with a due sense of the wisdom of us their ancestors,—that I have recorded, in these my pages,—in characters more durable than brass or marble,—so many of the opinions and practices of the present day. Among these, however, there is one which, although incidentally noticed, has not yet received that regular and solemn commemoration which its importance merits ;—I mean the theory and practice of *Forenoon Visits*. As detached and imperfect accounts of this matter might lead posterity into dangerous errors,—I proceed to unfold, for their edification, the whole mystery, nature, and modifications of the usage in question, as at present recognised in the best society of the British islands.

No one will undervalue this attempt who observes the labour and anxiety which scholars have bestowed in inquiring into such customs, among the nations of antiquity. A learned French Academician, the Abbé Couture, has devoted a formal Dissertation to the manner in which the Romans spent their time, in private life.* How happy would he have been, to have had such authentic testimony to resort to, as I am furnishing to posterity in these pages.

Be it known, then, to after generations, when they shall come to drink at these wells of wisdom and pleasantries which I am providing for their use, that in the nineteenth century,—in the metropolitan cities of this great and enlightened nation,—the Fashionable World employed the hours between Two and Five P. M. (usually called the *morning*) in driving through the principal streets and squares,—stopping before various doors,—rapping or ringing violently thereat, (through the instrumentality of a valet),—asking whether the lady of the house be at home,—and, on an answer negative, thrusting in certain small rectangular tickets, having the name of the party fairly or foully inscribed thereon. In this way it happens, that, towards the close of day, there is accumulated, in each of the fashionable mansions aforesaid, a mount of these tickets,—enriched with the names of Honourables and Right Honourables,—almost sufficient (if a homely illustration may be allowed) to thatch a pig-stye. In my projects for the improvement of society, and inculcating economical virtues among the great, I have sometimes thought of recommending a general inter-

* Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions, tom. i.

change and return of the above tickets, every evening, (as the bankers do with their notes) whereby each might reach its original owner, and be ready to perform the same evolution next day. But, before publishing my final views on this matter, I will hear what can be urged, on the other side, by the card-makers.

It must not be supposed by posterity, that the above practice indicates, on the part of the individuals concerned, the smallest wish or expectation of seeing each other. On the contrary, the house-porters, or valets, are carefully trained in the habit of small fibbing; and answer, with a grave face, that their lady is abroad, when she is, all the while, *reconnoîtreing* her visitor through a chink of the window blinds. The whole object and essence of the system consist, in accomplishing the greatest possible number of assaults at the doors of their acquaintance, in the course of the daily gyration; and any impediment to that consummation is looked upon as obstructing the great end in view.

So much is this the case, that a servant who had the *gaucherie* to answer that his lady was at home, would be considered as quite uncivilized, and unfit to fill his place in a genteel establishment. Such a blunder indeed tends to the equal discomfiture of the visitor and visited. A friend of mine, who is quite master of the science of forenoon calls, tells me that when such an accident befalls him, from the inexpertness of some country lout, newly caught,—he is always prepared for it. He affects to hear amiss:—Thrusts in his card;—and muttering, as he turns away, something about “sorry to be so unlucky,” &c.—leaves the

staring youth to settle the matter with his mistress, and his conscience, the best way he can. A foot-boy once held him in chase through two streets,—assuring him that his lady would be rejoiced to see him ;—but he made good his retreat, under a fit of incurable deafness and misapprehension.

In the view of abridging labour, and saving precious time (a commodity so much prized in the great world), various plans have been thought of, for discharging the ceremonial in question by deputy. This gave rise, in the metropolis of our southern neighbours, to the function of a visiting footman,—or lady's maid,—who was sent round in the carriage, with a list of the houses to be called at, and a corresponding number of cards. This, however, gave offence, as being thought not sufficiently respectful :—and besides, some narrow-souled husbands objected to the wages of this circulating domestic ;—alleging that their wives were the idlest persons about the house, and could be easiest spared. This was succeeded by the plan of sending round the empty coach. The footman went to the window, and appeared to take his orders (like the captains of Muley Moluch, after he was dead),—delivered in the card,—and so all was finished with due decorum. Unluckily, however, detection sometimes took place ; and family ruptures ensued. It was suggested as an amendment on these plans, that a waxen figure should be dressed up, resembling the lady visitor, which should be fixed on the seat of the carriage, and made to bow and simper, as it gave out the card :—nay even (in the improve-

ment of mechanism), to articulate short sentences, such as—"Sorry to have missed,"—"Hope the young family are well,"—and so on. There is, I own, in this idea, something so singularly ingenious and happy, (not to mention its possible extension to filling up a ball, or dinner-table,—and otherwise improving genteel society), that I think it worthy of the most serious attention :—and indeed would be disposed to give it countenance myself, were it not that I have a project of my own, to which I am naturally partial.

The hint of this is taken from the proposal of my friend SYMPOSIUS, which I laid before the public some time ago, of establishing a Register of the Engagements of the fashionable world. An additional branch might, I think, be happily engrafted on this plan,—to be denominated a Register of Visits. When the books were opened, nothing more would be requisite, to keep up an agreeable intercourse with your friends, than to attend at the Office, and, for a small fee, to get an entry made, under the proper date :—As thus :—
"The Countess of Codille does herself the honour of leaving her card for Lady Lovetrump, Mrs Mattadore, and the Honourable Miss Vole.—Colonel Curricie entertains permission to pay his respects to the Duchess of Driver.—The Reverend Mr Whisper has the felicity of inquiring for Lady Latehours, after her Ball."—
And so on,—with variations adapted to each case. Regular extracts from the books would, of course, be circulated periodically through the polite world ;—and thus,—by these short transfers,—in the manner of the *Agio* at Amsterdam,—the mutual visiting accounts

would be balanced with perfect accuracy. In this way, not only would the desired end be attained more easily and expeditiously (besides the saving of carriages and horses), but divers painful consequences would be avoided, which are incident to the present imperfect system.

For it is proper to record further, towards the instruction of after times, that the utmost importance is attached to the duty of regular visiting; and the most disastrous results arise from any failure therein. Offence the most grievous and inexpiable springs up from neglect in discharging debts of this kind. You will find yourself received with cold and averted looks by a lady with whom you are intimate;—and, while you are puzzling your brains for the cause, forget that you have omitted to leave your card since her last evening at home. You will behold two families of the highest figure looking as grim as winter on each other, from the opposite sides of a ball-room. A mortal feud has grown between them;—not, as in ancient times, from the plunder of cattle, or the slaughter of a kinsman,—but all owing to the delay of a call.

It is lamentable to think from what slight accidents results so fatal ensue. A careless valet,—unconscious of the affairs which agitate great minds,—instead of depositing the precious certificate in the card-rack, or on the lobby-table, perhaps throws it into the fire, or inscribes on it the direction of a box. The visit is not duly credited,—and irreconcilable enmities ensue.

I will conclude with laying before my readers a cu-

rious fragment which I obtained lately from a friend in London. It is part of the manuscript of a learned Chinese, who passed some time there, and noted down his observations on our manners and fashions. It is impossible, in a translation, to convey the fine figurative applications involved in the *Chinese roots*; or to preserve the force and harmony of the style, which begins thus, "*Ching pang whang Tong*," &c. But the substance may be given as follows :

" Among the many superstitions which possess the minds of this benighted people,—and withdraw them from the true worship of Fo,—they pay devotion to an Idol called FASHION,—in whose service they make incredible exertions, and undergo the heaviest penances. Sometimes they disguise their persons in uneasy and hideous garbs. Sometimes risk their necks in driving chariots,—therein abasing themselves so low as to assume the labours of their slaves and domestics. Sometimes they wedge and stifle themselves in crowded assemblies,—or pass the night in caperings and contortions, to the sound of squeaking instruments,—so as to excite the commiseration of a sane mind. But one of their most strange and irrational religious observances, in honour of this Deity, is the hurrying about in chariots, from door to door, and thrusting in small bits of card or paper, with their names inscribed thereon. This ignorant people believe that they attract the favour of their Idol, in proportion to the number of these tickets which they can circulate :—insomuch that a woman of high rank was heard to declare, that she could now die in peace, as she had made 2563 calls in the course of the season. As usually happens in other superstitions, the more absurd and grievous the services required, the more bigoted is the attachment of the votaries."

XCII. SCRIBLERUS REDIVIVUS.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Report of the further proceedings of the COURT OF CRITICISM.

Followeth the Report of further proceedings of the COURT OF CRITICISM, by me heretofore so happily instituted.

The first case called on, this morning, was a motion and affidavit *ex parte* William Dyaway (otherwise Dying Billy) of Rag Alley, setting forth, that he had, for some time, carried on a trade or manufacture of Sonnets, Madrigals, Acrostics, and other small rhyming ware; but finding no sale since the paper-tax, he was in danger of dying *literally* of hunger, as he had often, in his poetical life, expired *metaphorically* of love, and other the like maladies. He therefore prayed the Court to assign him a Patron. As I was casting about, in my own mind, for a proper person to discharge this office, my Lord Crambo, who happened to be in Court, mentioned that he sometimes amused his leisure with penning Songs, Epigrams, Impromptus, and such light things as became a person of quality:—That he used an Amanuensis to write and correct his pieces, and furnish him with quotations from the Classics, and such matters of drudgery:—That the last in his employment had been guilty of falling asleep, while his lordship was reading his poems; besides being rather im-

pertinent in his corrections; which obliged him to turn the fellow off; but he had no objection to take the present petitioner on trial. On good behaviour, he might depend on his lordship's countenance,—with a seat at the second table. These terms being acceded to, the Court made order accordingly.

The next was a complaint brought by Decimus Drama of Brick Court, against Gabriel Greenroom, manager of the Theatre, specifying that the complainant had furnished, for behoof of the said Gabriel, two unexceptionable pieces,—a Tragedy and Comedy,—the one full of the most pitiable incidents,—the other replete with wit, and much in Mr Congreve's manner; but the defendant had, nevertheless, obstinately and perversely, and to the great damage and detriment of the said theatre, and the public,—as well as to the plaintiff's private discomfort, loss, and vilification,—refused to bring either of them on the stage. To this the manager replied, that it was his practice to read such pieces as he received, to his own family; and observe the impression made on them, before venturing in presence of the public:—That, on making this trial with the complainant's dramas, his whole family fell fast asleep, before the end of the second act,—though he had provided snuff-boxes, smelling-bottles, and other means of resuscitation, usual on such occasions:—That even his wife, (who had been troubled with vapours and want of rest,) was quite overcome, and enjoyed a comfortable nap, whereby she had been much relieved:—That, accordingly, on returning the plays, he had

offered the complainant half-a-crown,—being the price of a bottle of the *Soporific Soothing Syrup*,—with which he should be well satisfied. On a full consideration of the case,—and glancing over the works in question,—I recommended the complainant to accept this offer, on the defendant generously increasing it to a crown-piece.

There now followed so many complaints of a like nature, against the managers of the theatres, on the part of authors of Tragedies, Comedies, Tragi-comedies, Farces, Operas, Preludes, Interludes, and Afterludes, of all sorts, that I was obliged to fix a particular day, during the sittings after term, for taking them up.

The Court next proceeded to a suit at the instance of Samuel Spondee, of the Seven Dials, against Diodorus Drench, M. D. for breach of contract. The plaintiff set forth, that he was hired by the Doctor (at the rate of five shillings per week, with an allowance for farthing candles,) to praise and recommend his *Patent Original Black Drop*, in prose and rhyme, for six months certain: That he had done this duty faithfully, in pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers; but the Doctor, pretending to take offence, had dismissed him at the end of the first month, whereby he was wholly thrown out of bread. The Doctor, when called upon for his defence, rose in great heat, and said, that things were come to a pretty pass, when gentlemen of his figure were called to account by such scurvy companions as the plaintiff, who ought to be indicted under the vagrant act:—That, for his part,

he usually kept a Poet, to recommend his medicine to the public notice,—though, to be sure, no one had less need of puffing :—That the chief employment of such a drudge was to write letters from all quarters of the country,—signed with the parties' names, and sworn to before magistrates,—describing their desperate cases, and the wonderful cures effected,—and ordering fresh packages of the medicine :—That the plaintiff had presumed to scruple at this work,—talked of his conscience, forsooth,—hinted doubts of the authenticity of the names and cases,—and such stuff. “ Now, Gentlemen of the jury,” exclaimed the Doctor, “ did you ever hear such insolence ?—I put it to you, gentlemen, whether a fellow like this is entitled to have a Conscience.—No, gentlemen !—if such presumption be encouraged, among those inferior classes of society, there will be no dealing with them. In short, gentlemen, I look for a clear verdict, with costs.”

Although the law was plainly in the Doctor's favour (the notion of countenancing such airs, in a poor Poet, being quite chimerical) I felt some compassion for the man, and was going to recommend a compromise. But, in spite of all I could do, the silly coxcomb began to harangue about the dignity of the poetical character,—delicacies of honour,—wounded feelings—and so on,—which wearied and provoked the jury, to such a degree, that they straightway found for the defendant.

There now came on a case, involving a very important question in the law of Copartnery. It was brought by Jacob Woolpack of Clerkenwell, who set forth, that

he, the said Jacob, had entered into a joint concern with Peregrine Peppercorn, of Puddledock, author, and Jeremy Quarto, of Paternoster Row, bookseller, for the composing, publishing, and vending, of one certain weekly paper, called the *Vipertooth*; wherein it was proposed (for the furtherance of morality, and a brisk sale), to make free comments on the character of individuals. That the complainant was engaged as the *Groaning Partner*. As this phrase was new to me, in the law of Copartnery, I begged that he would explain its meaning. He said, that his share in the concern was to consist solely in having his name made public as the Editor; and being ready to answer any consequences arising from the hasty temper of individuals:—That, in the course of discharging this duty to the concern, the plaintiff had undergone *two* broken heads, *five* tweaks by the nose,—*nine* kicks on the sitting-place,—with divers knocks, thwacks, raps, thumps, and bumps, on various parts of his body,—as per Inventory;—all to the grievous detriment and dishonour of the plaintiff's person aforesaid:—That he had, moreover, been *three times* tossed in a blanket,—*twice* subjected to the parish pump,—and, lastly, very near drowned by ducking in a horse-pond. But, notwithstanding all this, when he came to demand his share of the profits, his copartners had, on the most frivolous pretences, refused him all satisfaction,—whereby the plaintiff was heavily aggrieved,—and so forth.

As he was about to strip, in proof of his corporal damage, Mr Quarto, one of the defendants, stepped forward, and said, that he might spare himself the

trouble, as the drubbings were not denied. "But the defence, gentlemen," continued he, "is, that Mr Woolpack was found quite unfit for his duty,—wanted bottom,—mere dunghill, gentlemen, I assure you. He did, no doubt, at first, take the cudgel kindly enough,—and we had good hopes of him :—But when it came to the horse-pond, gentlemen, why, the fellow proved a perfect craven ;—was afraid of drowning, forsooth ;—peached, and told all. Through this weakness, gentlemen, not only have I myself been troubled with impertinent visitors ; but poor Mr Peppercorn got such a mauling from a fiery Welshman, that he has not been out of bed this fortnight. In short, gentlemen, we were obliged to turn the fellow off, as quite unserviceable ;—and are now actually looking out for another partner, in the *Groaning line*."

As this case was equally new and important, I turned over many grave authorities before delivering my opinion. At length, after full deliberation, I suggested to the jury, that the plaintiff should put in a detailed statement or schedule,—ruled and figured,—of the various contusions he had received,—distinguishing number, place, and quality :—and that he should then be allowed amends, to an equal amount, on the hides of his Coadjutors ;—to be taken in presence of the Court :—leaving them, however, the option of redeeming the same, at a shilling per thwack :—and allowing Mr Peppercorn, as a set off, the amount of his castigation from the Welshman. The jury were much struck with the wisdom and appropriate justice of this opinion, and gave their verdict accordingly.

This was followed by another case of joint adventure, between Simkin Whimper, and Jonas Daggerbowl, both of Grubstreet, who had joined in the composition of a tragedy. The action was brought by Mr Whimper, who represented, that although his own share of the work was fully equal, not to say superior, to that of his copartner; still Mr Daggerbowl had conspired and conspired, by unlawful means, to rob, cheat, cozen, and defraud the complainant of his just and equal half of the glory and reputation of the tragedy aforesaid:—giving out, by divers winks, nods, shrugs, hints, and innuendos, that all the shining passages were written by him the said Jonas, to the manifest damage, hurt, and prejudice of the complainant. Here Mr Daggerbowl, who seemed to be of a choleric temperament, broke forth,—“ And had I not right to say so, Sir?—Who was it, I pray, that murdered the king?”—“ And who,” replied Mr Whimper, “ carried off the princess?”—“ Who,” cried the former, “ raised the ghost with a bloody dagger?”—“ And who,” rejoined the latter, “ devised the parting of the lovers?”—“ Who,”—again vociferated Mr Daggerbowl.—But seeing no end to the interchange between these *Arcades ambo*, I commanded silence. I then directed proclamation to be made through the Court, calling on all and each there present to declare, whether any of them had ever seen or heard of the tragedy in question. But all replying by a negative shake of the head, I represented to the parties concerned that there was great reason to hope and believe, that the joint production

aforesaid was known only to the authors :—That I, therefore, held the damage alleged by the plaintiff as incapable of estimation ;—and recommended to them to bury all animosities over a bowl of punch, and straightway set about a new tragedy. This advice they took in good part,—bowed to the Court,—and retired very lovingly together.

No farther business remained, but one or two Motions and Petitions, which were disposed of as follows :

The Petition of Mrs Deborah Distich set forth, that she had been some time pregnant of a Pastoral ; but could not get delivered thereof, from the barbarity of the booksellers, who refused the in-lying charges of paper and printing,—on the pretence that her last *time* had produced only an *abortion* or *sooterkin*, wholly without form, sense, or life : Whereupon she prayed relief in the premises, &c.—Referred to a jury of Matrons :—Mr John Dennis, critic, to act as Forewoman.

The Petition of Laurence Luckyhit stated, that he had formerly belonged to the fraternity of Grubstreet ;—but having intermarried with Mistress Susannah Suet, of Clare Market, an opulent butcher's widow, with a running trade, his former associates imagined that they had a right to share in his good fortune, and came to dine with him, every day. That his said marriage was in nowise owing to his wits, but solely to a certain athletic make about the legs and shoulders, which took the widow's eye ;—so that his old acquaintance had no claim to any part therein. That his sub-

stance was in danger of being wasted by said daily invasion, &c. He therefore prayed an Injunction against the wrongous intruders aforesaid.—Restricted to ox-cheek and marrow-bones on Sundays ;—with an occasional pair of small-clothes, to make a proper appearance before the lady.

The other matters, being of little importance, passed of course, and the Court adjourned.

XCIII. CONVERSATION ON DRAMATIC POETRY.

Sermone benigno tendere noctem.

HOR.

I formerly mentioned that I sometimes assemble a few friends around the ancient and patriarchal meal of SUPPER,—at which, now-a-days, the intellectual feast of reason is as rare as the more material viands which cover the table. My worthy sister takes no great share in the former ;—but in the latter, she bestirs herself like a good housewife ;—and contrives sundry kick-shaws and delicacies to hit the palate of her guests,—though within the limits of temperance, and a prudent economy. These exertions, she flatters herself, are not wholly unsuccessful ;—for,—although every body declares that they eat no supper,—still it is remarked that Judith's tid-bits insensibly disappear ;—a result which doubtless proceeds from mere absence of mind, in our friends,—and their attention being engrossed by higher matters.

The conversation, at one of our late *Symposia*, turn-

ed on the English and French Drama, as connected with certain poetical theories, to which allusion has heretofore been made, in the course of my speculations. "The conclusion," said Mr Acid, "to which our worthy host, the KEEPER OF THE CABINET, came, in one of his papers on this subject, I hold to be perfectly just;—that the French and English Drama err in opposite extremes;—and that something more perfect than either might be expected, from uniting the excellences, and avoiding the faults, of both. Nor,—however difficult this may be,—do I see any absolute impossibility in it."—"And what," said Sir William Constant, "do you consider these respective excellences and defects to be?"—"Why, you know, Sir William," resumed Mr Acid, "that every newspaper critic will tell you, as readily as his alphabet, that the distinction is, that the English have *nature*,—the French nothing but *art*. But it seems to me that there are three things opposed to natural writing,—whether in dialogue or narrative,—whether in poetry or prose:—The first *Artificialness*,—the second *Unnaturalness*,—the third *Affectation*. Now, if the French incline to the *first*:—you will find in our old dramatists abundance of the *second*:—and, I fear, in some of our moderns, a few sprinklings of the *third*. A play I conceive to be an imitation of the language and conduct of men in real life. I know that some of the German wits have lately disputed this fundamental position, and started the notion of what they call a *Romantic Drama*, wherein all resemblance of nature is dispensed with;—and by help of which they

defend every absurdity, both in our drama and their own. Now, if all that they mean by this be, that many of the fables of our early dramatists are founded on supernatural events,—and on romantic characters and incidents, quite unlike those of real life,—I admit their doctrine as partly just,—that such compositions may be very attractive, although you cannot try them by the probabilities of actual life. Such plays, for instance, as *Macbeth*, the *Tempest*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream* of Shakspeare,—the *Picture of Massinger* ;—nay, even such as the *Twelfth Night* and *As you like it*,—you cannot call imitations of ordinary nature,—for they are founded on events, either wholly supernatural, or at least very unlike those which happen in real life. Yet if you once adopt the supposition of the fable, in such pieces, the characters and sentiments are natural, and therefore pleasing. But my objection to our elder bards is, that when confessedly copying after ordinary life, they commit the most flagrant violations of nature and probability. I will not here call up the second-rate stars of our ancient domestic galaxy,—Ford, Decker, Webster, Shirley,—or even Massinger,—who sometimes attempt to excite our sympathy by the most monstrous and revolting actions and sentiments ;—such as never were done or felt by human beings, since the creation :—But I will go at once to the high priest of nature, Shakspeare ;—and aver, that there is scarcely a play of his, where you do not find,—side by side with exquisite touches of nature,—the most startling violations of every thing natural in human feelings or conduct ;—and without

any apparent consciousness of the difference, on the part of the author. To illustrate my meaning by an instance. When Hamlet,—after the first interview with his father's departed spirit,—has every feeling wrought up to the extreme of pity, indignation, and reverential terror :—When he is swearing his friends to secrecy,—and a voice from the mysterious Being is heard, enforcing the solemn appeal :—What, I say, are then the words put into the mouth of an affectionate son,—a dignified and accomplished prince,—a man scarcely breathing from an ecstasy of awe and horror ?—He talks of the “ old mole working “ in the cellarage.”—Now, I ask if it be possible to conceive any thing more *unnatural* than this ?—any thing more impossible for a human being to have uttered in such circumstances ? I ask whether such a violation of nature occurs in the whole compass of the French Drama ? It is as if a Garrick, or a Siddons, in the midst of their sublimest tragic delineations, had begun dancing a jig. And accordingly, no actor ventures to speak the above words on the stage. They would shock the feelings of an audience too much to be endured.* Now, this is an instance of what (for want of a better word) I call *Unnaturalness* ;—as contradistinguished from the *Artificialness* which we object to in the French Tragedy.”

“ These, however,” said Mr D., “ are mere slips ;

* Voltaire cites, as an instance of the same fault, Hamlet calling out “ A rat ! a rat ! ”—when he stabs Polonius. This is bad enough ;—and still worse are his subsequent brutal jests on the deed :—but neither is quite so bad as the instance above quoted.

and, you know, all great poets, since the days of Homer, have been allowed to nod occasionally.”—“It is rather unlucky, however,” said Mr Acid, “that such drowsiness occurs so frequently among our ancient bards, for whom we arrogate the exclusive knowledge of nature. In this very play of Hamlet,—(than which none contains more abundant proofs of its author’s genius,)—let me just call your attention to the general conduct of the piece. This has been shortly alluded to, by our friend, in one of his papers,—but I would wish to pursue the detail a little further. I do not here question the supernatural agency of a disembodied spirit. On the contrary, nothing can be more great or just than the general plan of this drama, as unfolded in the first scenes. The apparition of a departed Monarch comes to disclose his foul murder to an affectionate son,—the person most bound to revenge it. Nothing can be more grand—or even more natural, (according to any conception we can form of such a subject,)—than the introduction of that unearthly Being. The history of the crime is given with a strange and solemn energy of language, perfectly adapted to the subject and speaker. The injunction of vengeance is laid on Hamlet;—and he promises to obey it. There is none of Shakspeare’s plays where a grand tragic fable is more nobly or justly opened; and the execution of vengeance naturally formed the subject of the piece. But, after sketching so great an outline, the Poet seems to slumber with his work, and to forget his own designs. Nothing that was to be expected happens. The conduct of the chief character is wholly inexplicable;—wholly unlike what was to have been look-

ed for from a person in his circumstances. For his assumed madness, there is no adequate—scarcely any apparent—motive. He might have pursued his plans of revenge without any such disguise ;—and after he does assume it, he turns it to no account. Every thing falls out by caprice and chance. His two mawkish fellow-students, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, drop from the clouds ;—and serve no purpose but to be laughed at by him,—and then smuggled off to England. The arrival of the players (improper in all respects as an incident in tragedy) is purely fortuitous, and alien to the business of the piece ;—and the notable device extracted from it by Hamlet, of *catching his uncle's conscience*,—by the representation of his own story,—is scarcely removed from downright puerility. I know not how others feel ;—but I honestly declare that I never could sit by an enlightened foreigner, and see such stuff represented, without absolute shame. Then comes a proposal to ship off our young prince to England. To this he makes no opposition,—though wholly subversive of his plans of vengeance. He returns, by a mere accident, after being actually embarked. And, at last, the catastrophe is brought about, also by chance, without any preparation or concurrence from him.”

“ But, my good Sir,” said Dr Grumble—(whom I formerly introduced to my readers, as a devotee of the sect of *Pessimism*,—but who admits Shakspeare alone as an exception from his theory),—“ in judging whether the character of Hamlet be a just imitation of nature, you must first inquire what sort of being the poet intended to portray. Hamlet is a prince, no

doubt;—but he is not meant to be represented as a strong-minded prince. His temperament is noble and *spirituel* (to borrow a phrase from our neighbours)—but sensitive, melancholy, and irresolute;—staggered by the novelty of its situation;—and wanting nerves for the great and fearful undertaking to which he is called. This will account for his constantly putting off the day of action,—and other apparent inconsistencies between his conduct and purpose.”—“Why, Doctor,” replied Mr Acid, “were I even to concede your theory, I fear it would embark you in a new set of inconsistencies, as formidable as the old? How, for instance, will a mind of this supposed delicacy accord with other parts of Hamlet’s conduct? His love for Ophelia is represented as sincere;—yet he not only treats her with cruelty and insult, in pursuance of his useless affectation of insanity;—but ends by murdering her father,—and driving her to distraction and death,—without appearing to suffer the smallest compunction for those enormities. Nay, on the death of the harmless old man (as formerly hinted,) he jests with the most brutal levity. His struggle with the brother of Ophelia, in her very grave, is another outrage against nature, decency, and common sense. All this would have been bad enough, even had such things been necessary towards his great purpose of revenge. But they serve no such end. They are mere acts of gratuitous superfluous barbarity,—of which a disposition such as that of Hamlet was the least likely to be guilty.”

“You assume, however,” said Mr T., “that the

madness of Hamlet is affected. Many think that it was meant to be real. The question has been warmly debated :—*et adhuc sub judice lis est.*—"Is it so?"—rejoined Mr Acid :—"And what greater proof, I pray you, can be given of the failure of an artist, than that men differ as to the resemblance of his picture?"

"But, Sir," said Mr S.,—the youngest of the party present,—“are not these all objections to the mere mechanical conduct of the play,—a matter beneath the attention of a genius like Shakspeare? In such things we may admit the superiority of the French, without conceding much.”—"Therein, my young friend," rejoined Mr Acid, "I cannot but differ from you. If the great object be to imitate nature, that imitation may consist as much in the conduct which you make your characters pursue, as in the words which you make them utter. But the fact is, that the two things are identical,—and equally require a strict observance of nature."

"In short, Sir, you hold," said Dr Grumble, "that a good tragedy resembles a bowl of punch :"—(the Doctor was then actually giving the finishing touch to one, by squeezing in a fresh lime).—"It is not enough that the ingredients be separately well flavoured :—they must also be harmoniously combined."—"Your similitude, my good Doctor," replied Mr Acid, "is not perfect ;—but it may pass, as being german to the matter in hand. So I beg leave to pledge you in the first bumper."

"The attack you have just made," said the Doctor,

after swallowing his glass, "on the immortal Shakspeare, did so provoke me, that I was fain to interpose a slight moistening, to cool the flame of my displeasure. I protest I have not heard so much rank treason and heterodoxy against our liege Lord of Parnassus, within my remembrance. And to assault him, too, in one of his strongest points,—his noble play of Hamlet,—where every touch is a picture, and every word a moral. You have confessed the superhuman energy with which his superhuman Being is drawn. But look at the character of Hamlet himself, which you have ventured to profane. What natural reflection,—what touching melancholy,—what pregnant remark,—what refinement of feeling. Observe the characteristic individuality of his nature;—how profoundly conceived;—how familiarized to our acquaintance. Where will you find such among the moving statues,—the cold pasteboard formalities which stalk about the French stage? That envious wasp Voltaire,—who felt his small genius rebuked under the master mind of Shakspeare,—fastening on some of the superficial negligences which you speak of, has presumed to term this splendid effort of genius, Hamlet, *the invention of a drunken savage*.* And where does he shew this presumption? Why, in the preface to his *Semiramis*,—a play in which he adventures to bend the bow of Ulysses,—and to imitate this very Hamlet, in raising the Ghost of a murdered King, to demand from his

* Le fruit de l'imagination d'un sauvage ivre."

Pref. to *Semiramis*.

son vengeance on a guilty mother. But what a puny Ghost it is, compared with the *Majesty of buried Denmark*. Why, it is a mere scarecrow, in a white sheet,—with goggle eyes,—and a farthing candle in its mouth,—to frighten children.”

“A truce, Doctor, with your raillery,”—said Mr W., who is even a more prejudiced admirer of the French theatre than Mr Acid,—“you run rather too fast. Voltaire, with all deference to your judgment, wrote fine tragedies, although *Semiramis* be none of his best:—and, where his private or national prejudices do not interfere, he is also an accomplished critic.”—“Which is as much as to say,”—interrupted the Doctor,—“that when frost does not bring cold, we shall have brave winter-weather:—But, unluckily, it so happens, that he never is without the prejudices you mention. Throughout his critical writings, he had only two objects in view;—the one, to make the French the greatest of all people;—the other, to make himself the greatest of all Frenchmen. Hence, he undervalues the ancients, and all the rest of the moderns, in comparison with his own countrymen;—and then undervalues all other Frenchmen, in comparison with himself. Both doctrines are illustrated, in a very becoming manner, in the preface to his *Edipe*,—where he first modestly prefers Corneille to Sophocles, and then himself to Corneille.”—“Nay, Doctor,” resumed Mr W., “you are at least as unjust to him, as he is to Shakspeare. At the very place from which you quoted, he has given the highest praise to the Ghost in *Hamlet*.”—“Thank you for

nothing," vociferated the Doctor.—" But you will permit me to say,"—rejoined Mr W.,—" that there is something in the stately majesty of subject and character, usual in the French drama, which elevates the mind far beyond the homely and familiar cares and incidents which are introduced into ours. Not to mention the rudeness and irregularities of the older poets,—let us take even your boasted masters of the pathetic,—Otway and Southern ;—and observe on what their two finest plays are founded. The whole tragic interest, in *Venice Preserved* and *Isabella*, literally turns on the want of money,—and imprudent marriages in private life.—What a subject for the dignity of the tragic muse !"—" Alas ! Sir," said the Doctor, " you have pronounced the highest panegyric on those two exquisite pieces. They are no fictions,—but life and nature itself. Look abroad, and around you—and you will find more suffering produced, in one year, by imprudence, and distress of worldly circumstances,—than by the sentimental cares of love, or the fall of monarchs, in a century."—" That, I suspect, Doctor," said I, " is scarcely a just criterion of the proper subject of Tragedy. You remember the observation of a great philosopher, that the loss of a leg is a greater calamity than the loss of a mistress :—Yet it would be a strange tragedy which turned on an amputation *."—" I make no other answer to your joke," said the Doctor," but that it is confounding an extreme with a medium. The sufferings in the plays which I have mentioned,—as well as in the Game-

* Theory of Moral Sentiments.

ster,—and in the terrible fables of Lillo,—(all of which turn on distress of worldly circumstances),—possess quite sufficient dignity to support the tragic Muse.”

“ Allow me here,” said Sir William Constant, “ so far to mediate between you, as to read some passages from one of the most impartial critics that have treated this trying subject, M. Grimm,—whom I happened to be looking over, before we sat down to supper. I beg you may make allowance for my *improvisò* translation; and you will, further, keep in mind, that, with all his impartiality, the author is still a Frenchman :—‘ If I were allowed,’ says he, ‘ to illustrate, ‘ by a comparison, the different impression made on ‘ me by Shakspeare and Racine,—I would say,— ‘ that, in the one, I contemplate a colossal statue, ‘ whose design is grand and imposing ;—but whose ‘ execution,—sometimes coarse,—sometimes negligent,—and sometimes of the most exquisite workmanship,—inspires even more wonder than admiration. The other,—of proportions as regular as the ‘ Belvidere Apollo,—and with a character more celestial than even Nature herself,—continues (notwithstanding a few feeble details) to charm mankind ‘ by the nobleness, the elegance, and the purity of its ‘ general style.’

“ Such is our author’s comparison of particulars :—Here is his result on the whole :—‘ The drama of ‘ Shakspeare may perhaps be excellent for the English : but only that of Corneille and Racine will do ‘ for the French : and I do not think we have much

‘ to complain of, in our share of the partition. When
‘ the English attempt to copy the regularity of our
‘ drama, they are only cold and feeble. When we
‘ try to follow their guidance, we become atrocious
‘ and extravagant,—without energy, and without ori-
‘ ginality.’ ”

“ From this last *dictum*,” said I, “ I must beg leave to dissent;—for I still think that a medium may be found, better than either extreme. It has, as I formerly hinted, been found, to a certain degree, by our poets Otway and Southern. And all that we want now-a-days—(a trifling postulate you will say),—is a genius such as theirs to renew the experiment, under a stricter discipline, and with a little more fertility.”—
“ As to that matter,” said the Doctor, “ I do not know;—but it really makes me sick to hear a puppy of a Frenchman,—or a Frenchified German,—talking of Shakspeare and Racine on such a footing of equality:—And at the very time, I warrant you, all that he knew of our poet was the construing of a scene or two, by the help of a dictionary. No Frenchman, Sir, has enough of *mind*, to get a proper acquaintance with the English language and literature: and although Grimm was by birth a German, he was quite spoiled and perverted, by living so long among the *coxcombry* of Paris!”—“ Far be it from me,” answered I, “ to defend the heresies of M. Grimm, either in Taste, or in more important matters;—but, as to the passage which offends you, I may urge, in extenuation, that he is merely comparing the two poets, as writers of tragedy, strictly so called. Now,

were we even to concede to the French dramatist an equal mastery of that art, we leave a mighty region of Shakspeare's fame untouched. The delicious romantic wildness of the *Tempest*, *As you like it*, and the *Midsummer Night's Dream*,—has no rival or resemblance in French poetry,—and the comic powers of our bard have as little, at least in Racine. Indeed,—if I must declare my opinion,—among all Shakspeare's endowments, his *forte* is comedy. It is there that his genius seems to wanton and luxuriate, with the greatest ease. In his tragic dialogue there is sometimes obscurity,—harshness,—labour,—and even unsuccessful labour. But in his comedy (particularly that inimitable creation of Falstaffe), there is a constant flow of variety and invention;—and,—what is singular,—the language is more easy, and less tinged with the marks of antiquity, than that of his tragic dialogue. This is an exception from the common rule; for the indirect evanescent allusions, and idiomatic phraseology of comic writing are usually found to *antiquize*, (if I may be allowed a new coinage), before the more general ideas, and forms of expression, which occur in solemn composition. Thus Aristophanes is more obscure than Homer or Euripides;—Plautus and Terence, than Virgil;—and there is a rust of age already creeping over Moliere, which has not reached Corneille or Racine. But the comic dialogue of Shakspeare forms an exception to this law; and affords one proof, among others, of the happier turn of this universal genius towards comedy.”

“All this is very well,”—said the Doctor, somewhat mollified by my tribute to the God of his idola-

try ;—" but you have forgotten another excellence of Shakspeare, quite unknown in the French drama :—those flights of pure poetry,—of the highest order,—which occur in his plays ;—and which often shew a conception and language as refined as ever belonged to the most finished bard, of the most polished age."—" I admit—I admit,—Doctor,"—said I,—“ for my own share. Let Mr Acid speak for himself.”—" Why, I admit too,"—said Mr Acid,—“ that is, *sub modo*. But how seldom can you read six lines to an end,—even of these passages,—without heinously wishing for a *turn of the style**."—" Pshaw !"—" said the Doctor,—“ mere finical folly :”—and straightway set about concocting a second bowl of punch. I must add, for the credit of the company, that the bowl was but a small one.

XCIV. CONVERSATION ON DRAMATIC POETRY.

Rectè, neene, crocum floresque perambulet Attæ
 Fabula, si dubitem, clament periisse pudorem
 Cuncti penè patres, ea cum reprehendere coner.

HOR.

On Avon's banks, where flowers eternal blow,
 If I but whisper that a weed can grow ;
 How will our fathers rise up in a rage,
 And swear all shame is lost in George's age.

POPE.

THE contents of the Doctor's bowl, number *two*, on making a round of the table, were pronounced excellent ; and he was complimented on having attained

* *Vertere styllum*,—the expression used by the Romans for blotting.

a perfection in his mystery, which no one had yet arrived at, in the sister art of compounding a dramatic poem. This little intermission, however, in the current of the fight, only gave the combatants a breathing-time to rest on their arms,—and, after a short pause, they thus renewed the onset.

“The chief error,” said Sir William Constant,” in the dialogue of the French drama, certainly is, that it is not sufficiently *Dramatic*;—by which I mean, that it is not sufficiently like natural unpremeditated discourse. The personages always seem as if they were brought out to harangue before an audience;—as if their replies and rejoinders did not arise spontaneously at the moment,—but had all been conned behind the scenes. This evil has partly arisen from the unbending pomp of their dramatic verse, which scarcely admits of those breaks and rapid turns, that befit the bursts of passion,—and even the inequalities of ordinary conversation. This air of solemnity, however,—though injurious to the composition, as dialogue,—gives room for examples of splendid poetical declamation, and lofty eloquence. Among the Greeks, Italians, and British, the highest flights of the Muse are reserved for epic and lyric composition. These nations consider such elevation as unsuitable to the rapidity, violence, and even homeliness of passion,—which form the staple of tragedy. I certainly do not go so far as to approve of introducing burlesque scenes into tragedy, as occurs so frequently in our ancient dramatists; for though this is a part of nature, yet it is a part which may be discarded, as

involving an unpleasant incongruity. But there is a middle tone, both of dialogue and character, which may be introduced in tragedy with the best effect. It relieves that predominance of exalted emotion,—that constant pressing on the main subject,—which is apt to overstrain and exhaust our sympathies; while, at the same time, the descent to this middle region is so gentle that the current of our feelings is not disturbed.”—“ And pray, Sir William,” said Mr W., “ do you include in this middle region, the worthy grave-diggers in Hamlet?—That is a rare tragic exhibition to contemplate, in company with an enlightened stranger.”—“ Why,” rejoined Sir William,—“ I have no scruple in giving up that: for natural and amusing comedy though it be,—and interspersed with striking reflection,—still it is out of place. But the familiarity which I contend for, is of a more mitigated kind. It comprehends such characters as *Hotspur*, — *Shylock*, — *Falconbridge*, — *Jacques*, — *Mercutio*, — *Sir Giles Overreach*,—which relieve the pomp and stiffness of the serious drama, and throw a reality over it, without too much outraging the tone of feeling which should predominate. Even *Pierre* expresses himself, now and then, with a familiar levity, and soldierly bluntness, which would not be tolerated on the French stage. This license, used with moderation, is, I think, an improvement on tragedy.”

“ Your remark,” said the Doctor, “ is perfectly just, and it equally applies to the dialogue occasionally introduced by our dramatists. Sir Joshua Reynolds, in

his Essays, takes notice of a passage in Shakspeare, of this middle kind, which he cites as an example of what, in painting, is termed *Repose*. It is in the first act of *Macbeth*, when King Duncan and Banquo come in front of Macbeth's castle, and remark the pleasantness of the site and climate.

DUNCAN. This castle hath a pleasant seat ; the air
Nimble and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO. This guest of summer
The temple-haunting martlet does approve
By his lov'd mansionry, that the Heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here. No jutty, frieze, buttress,
Or coigne of vantage, but this bird hath made
His pendent bed, and procreant cradle. Where they
Most breed and haunt, I have observ'd, the air
Is delicate.

Nothing can be more pleasing than this passage. Besides the naturalness, sweetness, and beauty of the images introduced ; it gives a soothing relief from the objects of supernatural wonder opened in the first act ;—and from those of guilt and horror which immediately follow in the second."

" I am tempted, Doctor," said Mr Acid, " by way of atonement for my former freedom, to add another instance, of the same kind, which occurred to me, the other day, on reading the play of *Julius Cæsar*. I am the more disposed to cite from this piece, as it is one which I have always admired ; and which certainly loses nothing on a comparison with the paltry imitation of it by Voltaire. This play affords many

examples of that middle style of character alluded to by Sir William ;—it is free from gross blemishes ;—in the three first acts (which complete the catastrophe of the death of Cæsar) the Unities are observed with sufficient strictness ; and show how little the author's genius would have suffered under a more rigid discipline. Above all, the character of Brutus is one of the noblest and gentlest ever exhibited in poetry.

“ The passage to which I allude is the first meeting of the conspirators, in the garden of Brutus. It is the scene which commences by his soliloquy, portraying so finely the tumult of his mind,—the scruples of his virtue,—and the gentleness of his nature. No words were ever more tender or beautiful than those which he addresses to his sleeping page :—

————— Boy Lucius!—Fast asleep !—
Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber !—
Thou hast no figures, nor no fantasies,
Which busy care draws in the brains of men :—
Therefore thou sleep'st so sound.

After a night of wakeful agitation, the conspirators are brought to him by Cassius, before day-break. Any ordinary poet,—(indeed any French poet,—ordinary or extraordinary)—would have begun the scene with a dissertation, by Cassius, in forty solid couplets, on war and policy ;—on the tyranny of Cæsar, and the glorious days of the Republic ;—with suitable invocations of the shades of the elder Brutus, Virginius, Curtius, Gracchus, and what not. To this Brutus would have responded by an equal weight of

rhyme,—and so the conversation would have been handed round. It appeared to Shakspeare, however, that when men first meet, to discuss a critical and hazardous undertaking, there is a sort of shyness and awkwardness in entering on business; and they begin with a distant skirmishing about indifferent matters, before they get into the heart of their purpose. He therefore conducts his interview in this manner. Cassius, after a short introduction of the conspirators to Brutus, takes him aside to whisper. The rest go on thus :

DECIUS. Here lies the East :—Doth not the sun break here ?

CASCA. No.

CINNA. O pardon, sir, it doth ;—and yon grey lines
That fret the clouds are messengers of day.

CASCA. You shall confess that you are both deceived.

Here, as I point my sword, the sun arises,
Which is a great way growing on the South,
Weighing the youthful season of the year.
Some two months hence, up higher, toward the North,
He first presents his fire ; and the high East
Stands, as the Capitol, directly here.

BRU. Give me your hands, all over, one by one, &c.

“ This passage, I think, deserves a place beside that quoted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the naturalness of the dialogue,—the sweetness of the images introduced,—and the relief which it gives to the serious and agitating business of the scene. And, however much I formerly censured the blemishes of our ancient drama, I am ready to allow, that in such dialogue as the above,—as well as in portraying the energy of

simple passion,—it possesses a truth and nature beyond what we see on the French stage.”

“But to what purpose,” said Sir William Constant, “shall we criticise authors, and lay down dramatic rules, unless with the view of raising up more successful adventurers in this branch of poetry? Now,—whatever the cause may be,—sorry am I to avow the fact, that, for a century past, there has been, with us, a woeful dearth of dramatic genius. With the exception of Douglas, there is hardly a tragedy which has become a classic in our literature. Nay,—even to go back for another century,—to the age of Shakspeare and his contemporaries,—were it not for Otway and Southern, (whose pieces, however excellent, are few in number,) there is almost as great a blank in that department of writing. Now, during the above period, (as you formerly noticed, Mr Keeper,) the French have formed and matured their tragic drama. Italy, within the same space, has produced Metastasio, Maffei, Alfieri, Monti; and Germany, several authors, who, though they have eclipsed our ancient dramatists in all their extravagances,—and even boasted of these as first-rate beauties,—are still men of great genius. Now, how happens it, that, during all this time, our countrymen, who are commonly not behind other nations in literature, have been such aliens from the Tragic Muse?”

“Why, Sir William,” said I, “various causes may contribute towards this unfortunate disjunction;—and indeed some allege that the whole Nine Sisterhood have looked rather cold upon us, during the last cen-

ture. But there seem to me now prevalent among our countrymen, certain prepossessions on the subject of the Tragic Drama, which have prevented success in it, for some time past ;—and which promise little more in time to come.

“ No one can dispute that the age of Elizabeth and James I. was fertile in dramatic genius. Besides Shakspeare, (whom, with all his blemishes, I consider as the greatest dramatic poet that ever lived,) there were many who possessed remarkable powers :—Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Marlow, Ford, Decker, Webster, Shirley, and others of less note. From the long cessation of dramatic genius which took place afterwards, the taste of our nation has been formed on these models,—particularly Shakspeare ;—and so habituated have we been to his actual performances,—that, on the one hand, we will endure nothing but what is in his style,—while, on the other, we pardon a thousand blemishes in him, which we would not tolerate in a new adventurer. That hurry, and irregularity, and bombast, and mobbing, and drumming, and jesting, and murdering, which occur in his Tragic Histories, render tame and insipid to our countrymen the unity and simplicity of a regular fable. While, on the other hand, were a hapless modern to attempt such liberties as Shakspeare has used,—wo be to him. It is remarked by Dr Johnson, with perfect justice, that were any of Shakspeare’s productions now to be exhibited, for the first time, as the work of a modern author, it would not be endured through two acts. But we have been so reconciled to

his blemishes, that we have the art of winking at them, as at our own private faults. It is, therefore, not merely in regard to his magic,—but to the whole style of his composition,—that the saying of Dryden is true,—‘ Within that circle none must walk but he.’”

“ So between the horns of your dilemma,” said the Doctor, “ you fairly dispose of all our future prospects in tragedy. If our authors attempt a different style from Shakspeare, they are despised as cold and tame :—If they copy him, they are exploded as extravagant.”

“ Why, pretty much as you say, Doctor,”—replied I,—“ though, like most pointed sentences, yours is perhaps expressed in too absolute a form. My doctrine however, more moderately taken, returns nearly to what I formerly expressed ;—that the best chance of a modern author will be, to blend something of the strictness of the French school, with something of the freedom of the English ;—and thus endeavour to unite the advantages, and avoid the errors, of both. I might explain my views by farther illustrations,—but such is the general result.”

“ I am sure,”—said Sir William,—“ that the company would be happy to hear those views a little in detail.”—“ Why, Sir William,”—returned I,—“ I am unwilling to oppress you with a lecture ;—but if you have patience for a few more words, I will state one or two admonitory cautions, which I would give a young *aspirant* after dramatic fame, in the British Islands.

“ In the *first* place, then, I would dissuade him

from imitating the general manner of Shakspeare, and his contemporaries, in the conduct of their pieces :— That is, the incoherency, childishness, and improbability of their fables,—their supernatural events and personages,—the inequality of their composition,—the introduction of burlesque characters,—the extravagance of their contrivances,—the violence of their figures,—the incongruity of their mixtures and transitions ;—and, in short, all those licenses, which,—while some of them lead to excellences, and some to defects, in our early authors,—are, one and all, too bold to be attempted by a degenerate modern. The truth is, that many of those incidents and characters which are not ungraceful in them,—as belonging to the nonage of literature and society,—become ridiculous affectation when copied by the authors of a later age. In the same manner, as the infantine ways, so pleasing and attractive in a child, are intolerable in a grown person.

“ In the *second* place, I would recommend, as the safest models for a young dramatic author, our own poets Otway and Southern. In as far as regards the conduct of their pieces, these authors have steered a middle course between the license of their elder countrymen, and the inconvenient strictness and stateliness of the French school. I am here considering their plays as purged of the odious burlesque scenes ; which are mere excrescences ; and were probably designed by their authors to be retrenched (as they now are) by the taste of a better age.

“ These two authors possessed the soul of pathetic dialogue ;—the most natural sentiment, conveyed in

language the most sweet, simple, and harmonious. Their tone of composition is remarkably similar. Otway has perhaps more of what may be called poetry,—more passages to be selected for beautiful figures, or melodious versification. He has also sketched the character of *Pierre* with a vigour which scarcely occurs in his rival. But in Southern's play of *Isabella*, there is a depth of pathos,—an intense and agonizing sympathy,—beyond any thing that I know of in the drama. The works of these two authors, exhibit, in my estimation, the finest examples of pathetic tragedy that occur in the literature of any nation.

“ Along with them, Lillo deserves to be studied, (particularly his play of the *Fatal Curiosity*),—at once for his power of portraying deep passion, and the homely energy of his style.

“ In the *third* place, as to the important branch of language and versification, I would still recommend to the young poet, as the chief staple of his study, the works of Otway and Southern. Their style is the simplest, and best adapted to natural dialogue. I am not unaware that this style may be invigorated by a judicious infusion of the rich idioms of our older bards,—particularly Shakspeare, Massinger, and Marlow. But this is an attempt requiring much tact and discretion. Most imitators of the ancient dialect, have remained as warnings, not encouragements, to after adventurers. But the better parts of that antique phraseology,—if ingrafted on the soft and flowing style of Otway and Southern,—would strengthen the tone of composition, and adapt it to subjects of greater dignity and terror than these last have chosen for their dra-

mas. The language of Shakspeare, in such characters as the *Ghost in Hamlet*, *Caliban*, and *Shylock*, is perfect in its kind : and exhibits an energy, and idiomatic richness, unattainable in our modern tongue. But still, the general style of speech and writing, in the age of Shakspeare and his contemporaries, was unsettled, irregular, and constantly vibrating between good and bad. In one passage you find the sweetest, most natural, and characteristic turns of expression ;—in another, uncouthness, straining, and cumbrous verbosity. The style of Otway and Southern has, throughout, more ease and regularity than that of the older dramatists ;—with a sufficient share of the force and richness of our ancient vernacular idiom. It is therefore safer as a general model.

“ In the *fourth* place, I would recommend the study of our ancient dramatists, in the view of catching the beautiful modulation of their blank verse, as we see it in their finer passages. This modulation (so nice and difficult an art) was profoundly understood by our older dramatic poets,—and by none better than Marlow. It received its perfection from the genius of Milton ; though, from the nature of his subject, it assumes, in his hands, a more unbending stateliness, than in theirs. During all this period, the modulation of rhymed verse seems to have been little understood, except by Spenser and Fairfax. How harsh and uncouth are the rhymes in the plays of Shakspeare and his contemporary dramatists,—and even those of Milton. The truth is, that their rhymes were merely blank verses, with rhymed ends. On the other hand, since our rhymed numbers were tuned

and modulated by Dryden, we have nearly lost the true *rythm* of blank verse. His own blank verse is merely rhyme without similar endings ;—and so is the blank verse of Rowe, of Young, of Thomson, of Armstrong, of Akenside. The modulation of blank, and of rhymed verse, is essentially different. The structure of blank verse consists chiefly of the *trochaic* foot (or accent on the first of two syllables),—throwing the emphatic tones on the beginning of the line,—and inducing a more slow and impeded utterance. In rhymed verse, the chief use is made of the *iambic* foot (or accent on the second of two syllables)—throwing the emphatic tones on the end of the line,—and inducing a more smooth and voluble utterance. The study of our ancient dramatists will give a young poet the finest examples of blank verse,—modulated to the more familiar tone of dialogue,—and admitting of the sudden turns, breaks, and irregularities of passion. Here, however,—as well as in copying the language of those poets,—discretion should be used, so as to avoid servile imitation, or mannerism.

“ The *last* use which I would advise a modern author to make of our ancient models, would be to catch from them the tone of natural unpremeditated conversation, which we usually find in their dialogue. For it is remarkable, that while these authors often outrage nature in the conduct of their fables, and the extravagance of their sentiments,—they seldom fail in naturalness and sweetness of dialogue.

“ In short, it appears to me, that by taking later and safer models as the ground-work of his study,—and only borrowing from our ancient writers such

of their excellences as may invigorate, without stiffening or barbarizing his style,—a modern author secures the best chance of pleasing his capricious and somewhat inconsistent countrymen,—who will not allow the idols of their ancient worship to be either followed or forsaken.”

XCV. REMINISCENCES OF MRS SIDDONS.

Quæ gravis Æsopus, quæ doctus Roscius egit.

HOR.

THE subject of my two last papers naturally recalls to my remembrance an individual, from whose supereminent powers our dramatic poets received their best illustration. Mrs Siddons was not only the greatest performer in Tragedy that has appeared in our time : but (in her own peculiar walk of art) was probably the greatest that ever existed,—or, perhaps, ever will exist. The assemblage of qualities, bodily and mental, which are required to constitute a first-rate Tragedian, is of the most rare and admirable kind : And these appeared, in this remarkable woman, in such completeness and perfection, as, I verily believe, never were found united in any other. To a countenance of the utmost beauty, she added a figure of commanding stature, and perfect symmetry. Her movements were majestic :—Her attitudes at once easy, graceful, and striking :—Her voice,—always musical,—had tones of passion which thrilled through

the very soul :—But, above all, the magic of her eye, —the play of her countenance,—were such, that she could express every shade of thought or feeling, without utterance ;—and some of her portraitures of silent passion were among the greatest of her efforts.* To all these bodily endowments Mrs Siddons added a judgment so unerring,—a conception of character so just and so profound,—that she communicated even to the noblest creations of our greatest poets something more noble and more great.

However perfect an actor's judgment may be, if nature have limited his bodily powers, he cannot attempt the higher flights of passion, without the risk of becoming bombastic or ungraceful,—perhaps even ridiculous. But it was in such passages that Mrs Siddons rose to her highest excellence. Such were the reach and flexibility of her bodily powers, that they kept pace with the highest conceptions of her mind : and she achieved her greatest triumphs in a region which other actors scarcely venture to approach. It was remarkable, too, that in the highest vehemence of passion, her countenance never assumed an unplea-

* No one can forget, who ever saw it, her performance of *Lady Randolph*, during the narrative of the old shepherd : Or the dreadful fixedness of her look in the sleep-walking horrors of *Lady Macbeth*. I have heard that, in her younger days, she exhibited the same powers of mute pantomime, in the part of *Cleora*, in Massinger's *Bondman* : who goes through several scenes in dumb show, from a vow of silence. Her vow also included a bandage over her eyes ; but this Mrs Siddons probably dispensed with.

sant expression, nor her gestures an ungraceful movement.

In short, nothing which I have ever seen, in any branch of the arts, comes up to my idea of perfection, so completely as the performance of Mrs Siddons. In almost every exertion of art, however admirable, you still can imagine something to improve :—But in her performance, not only was it impossible to detect a fault ;—but no one could form any conception of such excellence without actually seeing it.

It has been often remarked, that the fame of an actor is,—in proportion to the rare endowments required for his success,—unjustly transitory,—from the evanescent nature of his exertions. He cannot, like the poet or the painter, fix his excellences in a durable record, so as to be justly appreciated by after times. The powers of Garrick, so much admired by his contemporaries, are already waxing faint and cold on the imagination : And we regret that no competent judge has done all that might have been done to preserve a more perfect register of his achievements. This consideration has induced me to collect a few gleanings relative to the great Actress of our times, before all living memory of her powers shall pass away with the lives of those by whom they were witnessed.

By way of introduction to this design,—(the execution of which I must reserve for future occasions),—I will narrate an event which occurred on the first appearance of Mrs Siddons in this city, in the year 1784. It will perhaps manifest the triumph of her powers as strongly as any minuter representation which

I could give. I was then a young man, residing here as a student at our College,—and became a devoted admirer of the great Tragedian. The excitement and agitation,—not to say delirium,—created in our sober city by her presence is scarcely to be believed. Soon after mid-day, crowds besieged the doors of the Theatre. Ancient gentlemen, and delicate females, were seen exposing themselves to inconvenience, fatigue, and even danger, to get a glimpse of this prodigy. No respect of persons could be maintained amid such eagerness of competition,—and a seat in the shilling-gallery was hailed as good fortune by a Duchess. During the performance, the effects were still more striking. The firmest-minded men melted into tears :—Ladies were carried out in violent hysterics :—The high and the low,—the young and the old,—the ignorant and the refined,—all yielded before the resistless power ;—and minute criticism was lost in a tumult of overwhelming applause.

Amidst all this fever of admiration, however, there was one individual who remained uninfected. This was an intelligent and accomplished Frenchman, who had come to spend some years in this city, and with whom I was on habits of intimacy. We had entered into a mutual treaty to teach each other our respective languages ; but I must own that I had the lion's share of the bargain. My friend was beset with all the prejudices of his country,—and, among others, a thorough contempt for every language and literature but his own. He was hence a willing teacher, but a most unwilling scholar ;—and while I largely profited

by his lessons, he would scarcely listen to mine. Our conversation and reading were therefore chiefly confined to his native tongue. Under his guidance, I perused, with much advantage, the classics of his country :—But in the course of our studies, I maintained many a hard fight with him, on the merits of English literature. His politeness never failed ; —but he hearkened to me with that smiling unassenting superiority with which we regard the talk of a promising child. When I thundered out Shakspeare upon him, he would answer,—“ Ah, oui !—ce “ Monsieur de *Shaksper*,—il avoit beaucoup d’esprit, —beaucoup.”

On the arrival of Mrs Siddons, I was resolved to submit to this cool assumption no longer. Proud of her, as the glory of our country, I determined to make my friend witness her powers, whether he would or not,—and confess the inferiority of the Parisian Stage. To my first approaches he answered with his usual air of smiling incredulity :—hinted at the *Le Kains*, the *Clairons*, and the *Dumesnils* of the *Théâtre François* :—and shrugged up his shoulders, and elevated his eyebrows, at the idea of a tramontane Englishwoman attempting such a competition. Indignant as I was at all this,—I had still some fears of the success of my project : For, besides my friend’s prejudices,—and imperfect knowledge of our tongue,—the whole style of tragic acting in France is so artificial and exaggerated, that I had doubts if any Frenchman could relish the beauties of simplicity, nature, and passion. However, I determined to persevere :

And my friend, after many attempts at evasion, was compelled to yield to my wishes.

The play I selected for my experiment was *Venice Preserved*,—the unity and simplicity of whose fable seemed calculated to please a French critic. I began by insisting that we should read it over together,—a ceremony which my friend would willingly have dispensed with. The copy which I brought for his use was purged of the burlesque scenes,—(which are, indeed, generally omitted in the later editions,)—and down we sat to our studies. I not only (like Mr Bayes) *instilled the plot* into him ;—but commented on every scene,—and almost every word ;—till, at last, I got my disciple fully to comprehend the piece. Among all his prejudices, he was a man of accomplishment, and deep sensibility ;—and gradually awakened to the merits of this noble drama. He even allowed that the fable was so simple, and so touching, that it almost deserved to have been adorned by the genius of Racine.

Thus prepared,—I called, in a hackney coach, for my friend, on the evening of the performance,—(not less elated than Boswell was, at negotiating the junction between Samuel Johnson and Jack Wilkes),—and we drove to the Theatre. By a small application of that specific which oils the wheels of life, I procured, for my friend and myself, a seat in the centre of the pit, before the general auditory were admitted. Here, however, we had to wait two mortal hours, before the play began ;—during which space, I endeavoured to keep my friend in good humour, by going to the full stretch of my conscience, in commendation of the

French Drama. By way of preparing the way for our English artist, I ventured a distant hint on the exaggerated style of tragic acting in France, contrasted with the good taste and simplicity of their comedy. My friend was just about to reply, when the curtain rose.

The part of Jaffier was filled by Woods,—an actor who, under a mean exterior, possessed such spirit and judgment as long ensured the favour of the Edinburgh audience. Pierre was also respectably performed;—I forget by whom. These two characters, along with Belvidera, do, in fact, make up the whole drama. The two first scenes,—though beautiful in themselves,—were now impatiently listened to, as delaying the chief attraction. On their conclusion, Jaffier turned to welcome his lovely wife. Before she appeared, her thrilling tones were heard behind the scenes, as she uttered the words,—“Lead—lead me, ye virgins, on to “that kind voice:”—and the audience were mute as Silence. She then entered,—all radiant with grace and beauty,—and advanced towards Jaffier;—but was soon obliged to interrupt the fictitious scene, by acknowledging the tumultuous welcome with which she was greeted. The dialogue which ensues, between Jaffier and Belvidera, is elegant and pleasing,—but nothing more;—and concludes the act.

When the curtain dropped, I asked my friend how he liked her appearance,—little having occurred, on which to pass any farther judgment,—“*C’est une femme superbe,*”—answered he.

The next display of our great actress was in that

heart-rending scene which concludes the second act, where Jaffier delivers her, as a pledge, into the hands of the conspirators. Here, at once, burst forth all her powers. Her struggles for release,—her piercing cries,—the agony of her terror, love, and grief,—united to harrow up the soul;—and the scene ended in a deep murmur of sympathy and applause.

In the interval of the acts, I again turned to my friend. He was deeply affected, and unwilling to speak. He only said,—“C'est sublime !”

The Third Act opens with the beautiful scene between Jaffier and Belvidera, where she complains of the insult offered to her by Renault, and reproaches him for his unkindness, and want of confidence. He then unfolds to her the whole secret of the conspiracy. The communication of its horrid purposes, and her father's danger, again drew forth the terrible powers of this great performer;—while the softer expostulations with her husband were touched with the most persuasive skill.

In the Fourth Act, the plot is unfolded to the Senate :—the conspirators are condemned :—and Jaffier, —in a scene of great energy,—is cast off, by his indignant friend, as a betrayer and a coward. Then comes that fearful interview between Jaffier and Belvidera, where (under the exasperation of his wounded feelings), he twice attempts her life;—and where she, at last, leaps on his neck, and softens him to love. It is needless to say that, in the various turns of this scene, the great enchantress swayed our feelings to her will, and overwhelmed the soul in irresistible emotion.

Every heart responded to the sentiment of her enamoured husband, when,—dismissing her to intercede with her father for the life of his friends,—he exclaims ;—

Nor, till thy suit be granted, set him free :

But conquer him—as thou hast conquer'd me.

Lastly, came the concluding act of this noble drama. The first scene, betwixt Belvidera and her father, is graceful and pleasing,—but aims at nothing higher. Next, however, succeeds that terrible meeting betwixt her and Jaffier, where they are interrupted by the tolling bell which announces the death of his friends. The start of surprise,—the attitude of speechless horror,—assumed by Mrs Siddons, at this alarm,—still freezes the blood, on recollection. Soon after, follow, in quick succession, the closing paroxysms of despair, madness, and death. To convey by words, to one who never saw it, even the slightest conception of this part of her performance, is impossible. It could only be felt :—It cannot be described. Suffice it say,—that the force of her action,—the electrifying bursts of her voice—the varying magic of her eye—expressed every change of agony with such fearful truth,—that it awakened an intenseness of sympathy almost too painful to be endured.

At the close of the performance, the audience remained, for some time, absorbed in a stillness of feeling, too deep for any audible expression. This was succeeded by a general sigh, which relieved the over-fraught heart,—and afterwards found vent in tears. I had been myself so wound up in the scene, that I

had almost forgot the main object of my coming. I now, however, turned to speak to my friend;—but was surprised to see him,—with his hat drawn over his eyes,—pushing his way eagerly through the crowd, till he reached the pit door, through which he disappeared. I myself soon after returned home.

On calling, next morning, to inquire after my friend, and learn the cause of his sudden retreat, he told me that he never had experienced any thing similar from the dramatic art;—nor could he have believed it possible, had he not actually felt it. That all he had ever seen,—or even imagined,—of tragic performance, was a mere shadow to what he had witnessed last night. That, at the conclusion of the piece, he had felt all his faculties bound up in such a state of painful tension, that he could hardly breathe. That he had rushed home to his lodgings,—hurried up to his chamber,—locked himself in,—and thrown himself on his bed,—where, after passing a few moments in great agony,—he was relieved by a copious flood of tears. But for that relief, he declared that he must have fainted:—“ Oh ! mon ami,”—continued he,—“ c’est une femme sans pareille—sans prix.”

I condoled with my friend on his sufferings of sensibility; and added that I was quite satisfied with my triumph. However, as I was then engaged, I said that I would take some other opportunity, to resume our discussion of French and English plays and performers*.

* The foregoing narrative is, in all important particulars, founded in fact.

XCVI. VISIT FROM COLONEL GORGET.

Salve, vetustæ vitæ imago !

BUCHANAN.

I HAVE had, for some days past, residing with me as a guest, my worthy old friend, and neighbour in the country, Colonel Gorget. I received a letter from him about a week ago, telling me that he intended going to Harrowgate, for the benefit of the waters ;—so, I insisted on his taking our metropolis, in his way, and giving me his company for a few days. I promised myself much pleasure from the singularity and simplicity of the good old man's remarks, on all he should see and hear, after so long an absence. Indeed, it is impossible to be near him, without catching infection, as it were, from his cheerful benevolence—which overflows in good-will and charity towards all mankind,—and which justly rewards its possessor by a reflected enjoyment. Colonel Gorget,—though never a man of shining parts,—had still a plain useful understanding, and sense of propriety, which always kept him right in conduct : and, notwithstanding the gentleness of his nature, distinguished himself, in his youth, by courage, activity, and a high sense of honour. As those fiery qualities have subsided,—from the advance of years,—and the removal of all exciting causes,—the sweetness of his temper has found room for more uninterrupted exercise. Indeed,

I scarcely remember to have ever seen him ruffled, except by hearing of any thing cruel, ungenerous, or dishonourable. Even that love of his profession, which may be called *the last infirmity of his noble mind*, never predominates so far as to offend the self-esteem of others ; and,—if it be a weakness,—is one so venial, characteristic, and amiable, that one cannot wish it away.

As we sat at breakfast, on the morning after his arrival, and were laying our plans for the day ;—" I must really, my good friend," said he, " insist on your taking me, first of all, to see the Castle ; which has left the deepest impression on my mind, of any thing about Edinburgh. I could only distinguish the dark outline of its rocks and towers, as I entered the town last night. Our regiment lay there, when the Highlanders mutinied, and took post on Arthur's Seat. We had like to have hot work of it, in that affair :—Quite a lad then ;—a young spunky boy ;—I wanted no better fun than a brush with the philibegs :—but it blew over. I was here, too, when the West India fleet took refuge in our Frith,—just before that hard skelp, off the *Doggerbank*, in the year 1781 :—You remember, poor Dick Weston, of the Marines ;—he was killed there.—I had come home from America, after the sad business of *Saratoga*.—And a fine sight it was, to see Leith Roads covered with 300 sail ;—streamers flying ;—parties of pleasure going back and forward.—I well remember escorting some ladies out,—among others the fair Kitty Cowslip,—she that afterwards married Tom Shapely, of the 25th, you know.

—Ah! these are old stories now :—but it is well we are here to tell them ;—What say you, my good friend, Miss Judith ?”—“ Why really,” replied my sister, “ I do not know if it be quite prudent to refer to a lady on such old stories :—But, as for you, Colonel,—I protest you are the youngest man I see.”—“ Ah, you flatterer !”—said he gallantly ;—“ but you know I never could resist a compliment from a lady.”—“ Well, Colonel,” said I, “ we shall make a trial of your youth and strength to-day, in our walks about the city. There is nothing I like so much as to show it off :—So, have with you to the Castle.”

As we arrived on that spacious esplanade which stretches before the gate of this ancient fortress (the *Acropolis* of our northern Athens), and contemplated the rich and extensive prospect on all sides, my worthy old friend was thrown into transports of admiration. From this, however, he was drawn, to look at several detachments of soldiers going through their exercise. He approached one of them ; and remained some time fixed in deep attention, as the men went through their evolutions ;—now and then muttering to himself,—“ Very well :—very well, indeed.”—When they came to a pause, he addressed the Sergeant, who was giving the word of command :—“ Your men do very well :—Pray, may I ask what regiment ?”—On the Sergeant answering,—“ Ah !” said the Colonel, I once knew them well.—We fought, side by side, at *Bunker's Hill*,—and were involved together in that ugly scrape at *Saratoga*.—Ah! my boys, you have been luckier, in your days :—I see the noble badge of *Wa-*

terloo, at many of your breasts:—How I envy you that day;—and yet not envy you neither;—but only wish I had been there, to share it with you. No!—Never did the character of any Army stand higher than that of the British Army, at this moment.”—The Sergeant answered with great modesty and respect towards the worthy veteran. I asked whether we could have access, at present, to the Castle; to which he answered, “Certainly, Sir:”—and as the hour of exercise was over, he offered to attend us.

We passed up the winding causeway, which leads to the higher parts of the fortress. When we came to the first battery, on the right hand, the Colonel stopped to pace its length,—and carefully inspected the weight, make, and carriage of the guns. I was more engaged with the beauty of the prospect:—But the Sergeant reminded me that there was a higher point of view, at the small battery over head, from which I could command a still wider range. To this, accordingly, we mounted, by the same winding course:—And here we stood,—as if suspended in a cage from the clouds,—casting our eyes along the fertile valley of the Forth, with its distant hills, and all the varied magnificence of the surrounding landscape:—while the city, its suburbs, and villas, lay at a vast depth beneath. A stirring breeze sung round our ears; which blew away all unkindly vapours; and laid the whole scene brightly before us, under an unclouded sun.

As we turned to leave this point, a young woman with a child in her arms, and another holding by her gown, came up and spoke to the Sergeant. My friend

asked if she was his wife ; and on his answer in the affirmative ;—" Aye," said the Colonel, " and a pretty tidy young lass too ;—and keeps her children neat, as a soldier's wife should do. I always loved to see such about a regiment. Come hither, you young dog, (continued he, to the little boy at her foot), and tell me whether you have a mind to be a soldier ?"—The child coming up, and answering *Yes*,—my friend took him in his arms, and gave him a hearty kiss : Then setting him down again, he said,—“ There, you rogue, —there's a shilling for you, by way of bounty-money.”

We afterwards visited the several apartments, stores, and magazines,—with a minuteness which was not to be dispensed with by my worthy friend ;—but which was somewhat severe on me ;—and is, by no means, to be inflicted on my readers. The Colonel had known all these places, during his residence here, and was much pleased to find them in good order. Several new buildings had been erected since his time, —particularly the great western Barrack,—to which the Colonel was more easily reconciled than I was. He explained to me how useful it was for lodging troops, or prisoners of war :—I protested that it was a barbarous structure, and had spoiled the beauty of the castle.

After having examined every corner and cranny of this receptacle of arms, (our friend, the Sergeant, declining all remuneration but thanks), we resumed our walk through the city. The Colonel was desirous of seeing Holyrood-house,—the palace of our ancient

kings ;—but his eye being caught by Heriot's Hospital, as we descended the Castle-hill, we resolved first to go thither. We found the youthful pensioners of that foundation at dinner : and the features of my benevolent friend brightened at seeing so many clean, well-clothed, healthy, and happy children. After admiring the architecture of this noble and elaborate work of an unknown artist, (for, I understand, that the claim of *Inigo Jones*, though probable, is not certain), we turned our steps towards the Meadow,—George's Square,—and other southern parts of the city. The Colonel uttered many exclamations of wonder at the changes he observed ; and the multitude of neat and substantial buildings which had sprung up, even in this less fashionable quarter of the city. This walk,—together with the Courts of Law, New Town, and Calton Hill,—I thought enough for one day's exertion ; and postponed the ancient Eastern extremity of our city till another time.

As we passed through a narrow street, we observed a little girl walking slowly, under the weight of something which she carried in her lap. A lad rushing suddenly out of a shop, came against her,—when down went her apron, and its burden,—which, being potatoes, were scattered about the street. The lad cast a hasty glance at the mischief he had done,—and, without stopping, ran on. The poor child fell a-crying ; and my worthy friend, stopping to comfort her, began to lift up the potatoes ;—and did not cease till, betwixt his own exertions and hers,—with a little assistance from me,—the whole were recovered. This, with the

present of a sixpence, restored all to rights. As we turned to go on, he exclaimed :—" If I had caught " that young rascal :—but perhaps the giddy creature meant no harm after all."

In the evening, I carried my old friend to the theatre ; where his natural disposition to be pleased struggled with the cherished recollections of former days, in his remarks on all that he saw and heard ;—particularly the beauty of the ladies, and the merit of the performers. Observing a blooming girl, in a front box, he asked her name and family. On my informing him :—" What !" cried he, " the daughter of my old flame Betsey Mayflower ?"—" The very same," said I.—" Ah !" rejoined the Colonel, " I remember her mother, at the same age.—Yes,—she is like—very like her.—But there was a *something* about the mouth and smile of the charming Betsey, that is wanting here :—Yes, there was a *something*."—Casting his eyes about the house,—" All here is very complete and showy,"—said he,—" and these new invented gas-lights have a brilliant effect, no doubt ; and, to say truth, the actors do their parts well :—But you remember the old theatre in the Canongate :—there was a snugness and comfort about it :—and then the acting of those days,—a Digges, a Foote, a Yates, a Bellamy ;—O Sir ! it was quite another thing."—" Methinks," continued he, after a pause, " I do not see that bench of Critics, in the pit, which used to frequent it long ago ;—so knowing,—so well-bred,—so attentive,—so silent. It does not strike me that the manners have improved, in that quarter." Some noisy

young men having, soon after, endeavoured to force their way into an adjoining box,—to the disturbance of both actors and audience,—the Colonel,—after regarding them with a glance of indignation,—was obliged to extend his remark a little further than the pit.

I made my old friend retire early to rest, after his day's fatigue ;—and as the door of his bedchamber, which adjoins to mine, happened to be left open ;—I overheard him conversing with his servant, while he was undressing. This is a young lad of fifteen, who came with him from the country. “ Now, Jack,” said he, “ as I have brought you away from your own friends, I hold myself bound to take you back, pure and uncorrupted, as I found you. And as you will see a deal of vice and temptation in this city, and elsewhere, I must warn you to be constantly on your guard. You will meet with many evil practices, which you could form no notion of in the country. Therefore, I would have you keep the house ; and never ramble abroad after nightfall. In particular, you will guard against the ill example of those of your own station and calling. The servants here,—and, still more, those you will see at Harrowgate,—are, I am told, an insolent, idling, loose race of fellows ; and may corrupt an honest simple lad like you :—so be cautious, and avoid them, and follow none of their ways. And be sure you come to me, whenever you are at a loss :—and tell me every night how you have spent the day :—for I am resolved not to have the sin of perverting you on my conscience ; but will take you back

to the country, pure as I brought you away.”—“ Yes, Sir,”— answered the boy, with great simplicity. “ So now, Jack, you may go,—and put out the candle,—and see that you spill none of the snuff, for fear of fire :—and,—d’ye hear, boy,—mind you call me to-morrow at eight o’clock.”

XCVII. WALK THROUGH EDINBURGH.

Hæc tibi dictabam post fanum putre Vacunæ.

Hor.

I WILL introduce the subject of my second day’s walk through our city, with the worthy Colonel, by one or two observations, which seem not inapplicable to the occasion.

One of my excellent predecessors in the office of periodical instruction here, has remarked upon the difficulties which beset that function in a secondary or provincial town, compared with the Metropolis. This difference arises not merely from the variety of subjects which a great capital affords, in the description of its ordinary characters, occupations, and amusements; but from a certain air of dignity and importance attached to its lowest details, which cannot be claimed by a subordinate city. In this way, it happens, that the common streets, or theatres, or markets, or coffee-houses, of London or Paris,—the daily habits and avocations of the people,—are commented

on, without scruple; and are read, with interest, both by themselves and others; while such minute representations of our northern Metropolis, would hazard that ridicule which awaits every attempt to confer importance on things holding but little in the estimation of mankind.

Another inconvenience of sketching scenes or characters in a small community, is the risk of personal application. An over watchful inspection of their neighbours is indeed the vice of all narrow societies. Mr Burke used to say that he grew weary of living among his worthy constituents at Bristol, as he was obliged *to be so much on his good behaviour*. Exuberant as the mind of that illustrious man was,—and pure as were his private manners,—he was fatigued with the constant display required of him;—and harassed by the tattle and inquisitiveness of his provincial friends;—and longed for the noisy quiet, and crowded obscurity, of London.

The freedom and variety of observation which, from these combined causes, belong to the inhabitant of a great city, are conspicuous in those works which have had the advantage of such a birthplace. How much of the Tatler and Spectator are taken up in describing the living men and manners,—the daily proceedings, habits, and usages,—of their time! The same remark applies to that excellent French publication to which I formerly alluded, *L'Hermite de la Chaussée d'Antin*. If the proper scope and object of such a work be a living picture of the manners of a great city, it has probably attained that end more strictly than any

other work ever did. By far the greater proportion of it is employed in describing the fashions and usages of the different classes of the inhabitants of Paris, of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest;—their places of resort, their shows, promenades, coffee-houses, and daily modes of life. This is, no doubt, done with a variety, truth, and humour, which has rarely been surpassed; but if one were allowed to hint a fault, where there is so much to commend, perhaps it might be said that such subjects engross too much notice,—to the exclusion of others of a higher interest. But however this may be,—he who attempts such a publication in a narrower society, finds himself nearly cut off from the largest branch of his subject; and must often select topics which have neither any temporary nor local interest to recommend them.

And yet this fair city of ours is not to be confounded with the common class of secondary or provincial towns. It is not only remarkable for the beauty of its situation,—the uncommonness and variety of its aspects,—and the elegance of its buildings;—but it is the capital of an ancient independent people,—of a people distinguished for valour, talents, and patriotism. It was formerly the residence of royalty and rank,—the scene of historical events and recollections. At this day, it continues to be the centre of learning and refinement. It is the seat of a distinguished University, and of the Supreme Courts of Law; and is resorted to, as a winter residence, by many of the nobility, and higher classes of gentry. The society of Edinburgh is thus of a peculiar character. It is less separated,

than elsewhere, into distinct classes. The learned and grave mingle with the gay; and thus correct, in some measure, the frivolousness of fashionable life. Our intercourse combines the elegant manners of a metropolis,—with that rational conversation which is seldom found in the mobbish dissipations of a great city. Our society is no doubt getting worse, as it is assuming more the usages of London. But, making every allowance, I still incline to doubt, whether any city in our island can, in proportion to its numbers, shew so much of what is good in social intercourse, with so little of what is bad.

But it is with its local aspect that I am at present concerned,—in reference to my walk with the worthy Colonel. The exterior of Edinburgh exhibits one of the most curious contrasts imaginable. It consists indeed of two cities, as dissimilar as possible, united into one,—yet so far disjoined as to preserve their distinct characters. The modern part,—which stands by itself,—with all the symmetry of architectural decoration, exhibits the gaiety and bustle of modern resort. The older quarter,—with a peculiarity and irregularity of building quite the reverse of the other,—seems the remnant of a former age;—and though, in some places, filled with the busy hum of men, yet, in others, shews the stillness and seclusion of a forsaken city. This is most remarkable in that quarter which was once the scene of splendour and royalty, the east or court end of the town;—and fills the mind with those melancholy reflections which attend the instability of fortune, and the emptiness of human grandeur long passed away.

These feelings were awakened, of new, during my progress down the street called the Canongate, with my old friend, on our way to visit the Palace of Holyrood House. This street is now bordered by mean habitations on either side (some however exhibiting, in detached patches of carved work, the traces of former magnificence):—but, retired within courts, are several spacious mansions, which still retain the names of the noble families to whom they belonged. Among these, the most conspicuous, Queensberry House, though still frowning with an air of rude stateliness, has suffered the greatest vicissitudes of time and change;—having successively transmigrated into a barrack,—an hospital,—and a manufactory.

There is a grave and solitary dignity about the ancient Palace, which harmonizes with the recollections attached to it. The architecture is simple and elegant,—erected at different times,—but combining into a whole, sufficiently regular. The site,—though rather low,—is free from the incumbrance of adjacent buildings: and the roofless Chapel is in a beautiful taste of Gothic ornament. The green lawn too, on which the palace stands,—with the unequal rocks and elevations of Arthur's Seat for a back ground,—accords well with the character of the scene. The adjoining park being a sanctuary for debtors, some of those disconsolate beings are usually seen sauntering up and down, whose listless melancholy looks add to the prevailing impression.

We were pleased to find, on this visit, that the external parts of our ancient palace were kept with

neatness, and the encroachments of time repaired. After walking a few turns under the cloistered archway which surrounds the inner court, we visited the apartments within. The ancient gossip who shewed them seemed as little changed as themselves;—and delivered her story, with the old inflexible monotony of voice and visage. The Colonel, as a loyal soldier, first insisted on seeing the levee room used by George IV. on his visit to Scotland.—“ How I regret,” said he, “ that illness prevented me from paying my duty ; and witnessing that gallant show.”—We next passed through the long gallery, where our aboriginal line of monarchs, frowned from their canvass as fearfully as ever. Poor Queen Mary’s bed, and chairs, and work-boxes, in the north-west angle of the building, stood in their accustomed stiffness ;—and the drop of Rizzio’s blood on the floor was still indelible.—“ But, my good woman,” said the Colonel, “ are you sure it is Rizzio’s blood ?—To me it looks mighty like a splash of ink.”—Our attendant stood aghast at this audacious heresy.—“ O no, Sir,—It’s no ink,—but the blood o’ man :—and a’ the scrubbing that ever was scrubbit will no tak it out.”

Into the question of the moral character of Mary, this is not the place to enter. If she did err, she was surrounded by wicked advisers, who, at once, encouraged her to evil, and secured all the profits of her guilt. But, in truth, the main cause of the ruin of Mary was her inflexible adherence to a religious faith which was different from that of her subjects. At all events, grievous was the penalty she paid ;—and I

envy not his heart who, amidst these sad memorials of her life and residence, could enter into a jealous calculation of her failings, or refuse a sigh to the misfortunes of this lovely and accomplished princess.

“ For my part,” said the Colonel warmly, “ I have no doubt of her innocence,—not a shadow of doubt.—But she was beset by a villanous crew,—your Mortons, Ruthvens, Lindsays :—and then her precious brother,—that sanctified hypocrite,—*the gude Regent* :—Well did he merit the bullet of Bothwellhaugh.”

We next visited the adjoining Chapel, and contemplated its various tombs and monumental inscriptions ;—together with the armour which is said to have belonged to the large-limbed but pigmy-souled Darnley. On all these matters our loquacious conductor enlarged so fully, that we were fain to interrupt her harangue by a small gratuity, and take our departure.

We now wandered towards the hill of Arthur Seat, which is here broken into elevations, and sequestered glens ; where, at the distance of a few hundred paces from the town, you might fancy yourself in a remote solitude. We made our way up one of those eminences, which is crowned with the ruins of St Anthony’s Chapel ; and, seating ourselves on a fallen fragment, gave way to the observations and reflections which such a scene inspired. When the ancient Monks first chose this place for their abode, the foundation in the plain beneath was an Abbey, not a Palace. After it became the residence of the Kings of Scotland, the fate of its successive tenants might afford those Solitaries a living lesson of the vanity of human

grandeur. The five first princes of the name of James all perished in the flower of their age ;—four by violent death ;—the fifth of a broken heart. Mary was the sixth. And the hereditary misfortunes of the family were transmitted to her grandson Charles,—her great-grandson James,—and, after him, continued till the final extinction of the line.

While the fate of this illustrious race had exhibited a moral lesson of the fragility of human fortunes ;—while the Monks, like the Monarchs, had passed away, and their residence was crumbling into oblivion,—we could not but contrast these mutations with the permanent features of nature, which appeared on every side. The rocky summits of the mountain,—the green valleys,—the sea in prospect, with its distant headlands and isles ;—these had remained unchanged, through so many changes of human fortune,—through the progress from barbarity to refinement,—through the vicissitudes of war and peace,—of prosperity and misfortune. Such had been their aspect, before a stone was laid of that city, whose busy and thriving multitudes now moved beneath our view ;—and such they would continue, when not a stone, or a tongue, remained to tell where the city stood.

Such were the moralizings of my ancient friend, and myself, among the ruins of St Anthony's Chapel. And having reduced them to writing, I thought that I could not usher them to the world under fitter auspices than the motto prefixed to this paper, where a classic Bard of antiquity describes himself in a similar spot and occupation.

XCVIII. EXCESS IN RELIGIOUS FEELING.

Id arbitror .

Imprimis in vitâ esse utile, ut ne quid nimis.

TER.

Insani sapiens nomen ferat,—æquus iniqui,—

Ultra quam satis est, virtutem si petât ipsam.

HOR.

Raisonner est l'emploi de toute ma maison,

Et le *Raisonnement* a banni la *Raison*.

MOLIERE.

" TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

" SIR,—I am a plain man, having followed the calling of a shopkeeper, in a small way, in this city. My father, who was in the same line of business, gave me a good education, which, you know, is not uncommon in this country, even among persons of moderate circumstances. In course of time, I succeeded him in the shop; and soon after married the daughter of a neighbouring tradesman, with whom I got a portion of Five hundred pounds. It has pleased Providence to prosper my undertakings. I am now come into a better shop;—have extended my concerns;—and kept in good credit with the world. I have one daughter creditably married, and my eldest boy is doing well in the West Indies. My family at home consists of my wife, three unmarried daughters; and a younger son, who attends in the shop along with me. My

wife did so, when we first married ; but since the world mended with us, she stays at home, to look after the girls. More lately, I have bought a snug box, a little way out of town ; and can now afford to come in, every day, in my one-horse chaise.

“ In short, Sir, no family could go on in a more decent or happy way than mine, till within this twelvemonth past, that a new light has broken in upon us. I received a pious education myself, and was always of a quiet and serious turn, and a regular observer, not only of the outward ordinances, but, I trust, of the real practical duties of Religion. I was, however, both from temper and conviction, an enemy to all enthusiastic ways or pretences ; and endeavoured to bring up my family in the same notions. I encouraged the visits of several pious and rational Clergymen, whether of the establishment or not, and took pleasure in their conversation. But, some time ago, my wife, being on a visit, fell in company with one Mr M’Quake, a reverend gentleman of the dissenting persuasion, and when she came home, could talk of nothing but his edifying discourse. She, soon after, began to forsake the church we had always frequented, to attend his meeting-house. By degrees, she drew her daughters to the same place : and, once or twice, prevailed on me to go and hear her favourite. I own to you, Sir, that this reverend gentleman’s doctrines were little to my taste. He insisted more on nice distinctions, and obscure commentaries, on points of faith, than on the great branches of Moral and Christian duty. I seldom heard any thing from him about ac-

tive virtue, and charity, towards mankind ;—about controlling our passions,—resisting temptation,—observing strict honesty in our dealings,—cherishing our families,—forgiving injuries,—and seeking to please God by uprightness in all our ways :—But a great deal concerning faith, and grace,—and the chosen few,—and the backslidings of defection,—and inward light,—and manifestations of the spirit,—and the errors of all other sects and doctrines beside his own. This, I must confess, did not greatly please me, in the first instance ;— and I had still less reason to be pleased in the sequel.

“ I do not know, Sir, whether you have remarked, among your married acquaintance, (for you are, I find, yourself a bachelor), that when the husband wishes to bring any thing about in the family, he sometimes succeeds, and sometimes not ;—but the wife never fails. My spouse was eager to get her friend Mr M’Quake introduced into our house ; and, although I resisted for some time, she prevailed at last. From that hour, Sir, our domestic peace has been broken ; and I cannot say that I am master of my own family. This meddling person gradually extended his influence over my wife and daughters, to such a degree, that he directed them in every thing ; and now has more of their company and confidence than I have myself. All persons and doctrines that they formerly held in esteem are now despised ; and nothing is good enough for them, but what they learn from Mr M’Quake. Were this new strictness shown in a greater meekness of temper,—filial respect,—or active charity ;—or did

it even confine itself to more frequent habits of public and private devotion,—I should be far from finding fault. But the only fruits which I can yet perceive from it are a canting, pragmatism, disputatious spirit,—proud of its own knowledge,—splitting of plain doctrines into nice points of controversy,—confounding reason in a mass of unintelligible phrases,—and despising all who differ from them,—or who would avoid topics of this kind, as only tending to puzzle the understanding, and narrow the heart. Then, there is such a constant work of morning lectures,—and forenoon exhortations,—and evening conferences;—such waggon-loads of pamphlets, and tracts, and magazines, and serious calls, and occasional discourses;—such a talk of experiences, and manifestations, and comparisons, and conversions, and inward calls;—that every duty of real life is neglected, and they exist in a world of their own imagination. I believe that God intended the discharge of our active duties in this life, as the best preparation for the next; and that religious exercises or contemplations should only employ a certain portion of our thoughts. But my wife and daughters have their time so entirely engrossed by such concerns, that they are, in a manner, estranged from all other duties. It was but a few weeks since, that I was left, the whole afternoon, by myself, with a smart fever, while they were at an evangelical conference. And the other day, I had near caught my death, for want of dry clothes, after a shower, as my wife had carried off the keys to the forenoon exhortation. It seems to me, Sir, a very doubtful kind of Religion

which leads us to neglect the duties of life. Neither do I think it a wise one, which forbids innocent pleasures. I used to enjoy myself with seeing my friends at dinner, now and then, and a rubber at whist in the evening. But all this is now over. My wife's humours have driven my old friends from the house ;—and as to cards, she burned every pack within the door, at the instigation of Mr M'Quake,—who declared, (turning up his eyes,) that, for his part, he marvelled the house did not tumble on our heads, when such abominations were allowed within its walls.

“ All this, Sir, is troublesome enough ;—but there would be less room for complaint, were my wife and daughters satisfied with keeping their extravagances to themselves. Among their plans and projects, however, one is to convert me ; and, to this end, they ply me, from morning till night, with doctrines, and heresies,—and Arians,—and Arminians,—and Socinians,—and Erastians,—and Pelagians,—and Antinomians,—and Old Lights,—and New Lights ;—till it absolutely makes me giddy to hear them. Were all this from a real concern for my eternal welfare, it would, however distressing, be more easily endured. But, underneath their pious pretences, I discover too plainly the vanity of talking,—the pride of spiritual superiority,—and the love of meddling and domineering,—which they share with their ghostly adviser. I cannot drive it out of my mind, Sir, that Religion was given us, rather to be a rule of life, than a topic of endless disputation.

“ My son, too, (who is a dutiful well-doing lad as any in town) has been beset, in the same way, by his sisters,—so that they give him no rest. In the forenoon he gets cut of their reach, during his attendance in the shop ; but the evenings, which he used to spend sociably among us, they have rendered so uncomfortable, that they often drive him abroad ; and I tremble lest the poor boy should thus be thrown into the worst of all temptations, at his years, that of ill company.

“ If you, Mr Keeper, have any counsel or consolation to give me, in these distressing circumstances, I hope you will not grudge it. I still retain so much influence in my family, as to take in your paper ; though it is nearly overlaid by the mass of tracts and pamphlets which shower in daily on my wife and daughters. They have long laid aside all profane learning ; yet I think it is possible that a proper representation of their conduct from you might meet their eye ; and tend, if not to cure, at least to abate their folly. Meantime, I remain, Sir, your perplexed humble servant,

“ JACOB SOBER.”

I agree with my worthy correspondent Mr Sober, that those branches of his family whom he complains of, are far beyond any advice of mine. The subject is, indeed, somewhat above my province. But if the sentiments of a layman, dictated by ordinary reflection and common sense, can be of any value to him or others, they are at his service. I enter on the subject, with unfeigned respect for errors proceeding from

so excellent a cause : but one of the chief sources of evil, in this world, is the carrying to extreme, or abuse, what is in itself good.

I would begin by observing, that those persons are unwise who would disown the authority of human reason, in matters of religious belief. If once you reject this test, whereby our only just convictions in Religion are obtained, and the preference of one system over another is determined ;—and argue that this or the other observance may be of use,—and can at least do no harm ;—you immediately pave the way to the whole mummeries of superstition ; and discredit Religion in the eyes of those whose opinion ultimately leads the rest of mankind. It was the application of reason which recovered us from the abuses of the Church of Rome ; and if we now lay it aside, and adopt every form or practice which an unregulated imagination may suggest, as tending towards salvation,—without inquiring whether there is any ground to believe in its efficacy,—we may introduce a new set of observances as frivolous as those which we disowned. An over-anxiety about the state of our soul,—as about that of our body,—leads to the encouragement of quacks and nostrums, which are at least useless, and often injurious, to both.

All experience tells us, that Religious Feeling may become too fervent. When it assumes the character of a passion,—or falls under the exaggerations of a heated fancy,—the fruits are only folly and evil. For my part, I have always been of opinion, that the chief dis-

credits brought upon Religion have proceeded from its mistaken friends.

The next consideration is the effect of such opinions on the mind which entertains them. When religious concerns are made the subject of too intense and continued contemplation;—and still more, when supposed feelings and impressions are received as the test of acceptance or reprobation;—a field is opened for all the wanderings of a heated fancy; and the most fatal effects are produced on young and sensitive minds. The fate of the excellent Cowper should be a perpetual warning against such extremes. That his misery was solely occasioned by his gloomy views of religion, I am far from alleging. His mind was evidently morbid from the first. But this morbid tendency was inflamed by perpetually brooding on such awful and puzzling contemplations. What, on more phlegmatic natures, merely produced a moderate excitement, drove him to despair and insanity. The same danger awaits all those whose feelings are acute, and imaginations warm; and should never be forgotten by the instructors of youth, who, in instilling religious opinions, should blend them with reason and moderation.

The notion of taking, as a test of acceptance with Heaven, the undefined and undefinable suggestions of inward feeling, has this further evil consequence, that it inspires violent and forward spirits with undue presumption,—as it depresses too much the meek, the timid, and self-accusing. While the fanatic Cromwell, steeped in crime, thought himself confident of

salvation, from inward assurance';—the purest, most amiable, of human beings, Cowper,—from the humility of a gentle mind,—and the fallible indications of unequal spirits,—imagined himself the object of the reprobation of Heaven.

I would lastly observe, that the scheme of our faith, and the means of attaining to happiness hereafter, were not designed for speculative and inquiring minds alone; but for the mass of mankind,—the unlearned, the humble, and the busy. To imagine such difficulties as some have supposed in discovering the path of life;—to make it depend on nice and abstract distinctions, which few have leisure to pursue, and none can thoroughly comprehend;—would be inconsistent with the goodness of the Deity. However mysterious many points of faith,—the rules of moral duty, and the spirit of charity, inculcated in the Gospel, are plain and clear;—and were, of course, designed for our chief study and observance. From the constitution of this world, it is evident, that the common duties of life were meant to engage a large share of our time and thoughts. In the discharge of these, the greatest exertions of virtue, whether in acting or suffering, are called forth. And all religious notions which tend to withdraw us from them, are of most suspicious soundness.

The public and private exercises of Devotion,—and still more its habitual impression,—are doubtless the first concern. But, after this, it is reasonable to think, that active good will, and good works, towards our fellow-creatures,—particularly those most nearly attached

to us by the ties of nature,—regulating our conduct by strict integrity,—government of the passions,—firmness in temptation,—patience under suffering,—with a proper exercise of the mental powers, and attention to worldly duties,—are the most acceptable service to God, and the most likely means to attain happiness here and hereafter. One of the plainest and most comprehensive estimates of Religion which we have received from the Inspired Writings, is the following: “Pure Religion and undefiled before God is this:—To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction;—And to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.”

XCIX. SUCCESSIVE OCCUPANTS OF A STREET.

—Puncto quod mobilis horæ,
Nunc prece, nunc pretio, nunc vi, nunc sorte supremâ,
Permutet dominos, et cedat in altera jura. HOR.

I went, a few mornings ago, to inquire after a worthy old friend, in this city, who had been ailing. When I came near his house, which is in the New Town, I was agreeably surprised to find him walking on the foot-pavement before his door. On my congratulating him upon this unexpected change,—“Why,” said he, “I believe I am as well as seventy-five can expect to be, when united to a constitution which was never of the strongest. I can still creep

about a little, you see, and enjoy the sun. Much is talked of his splendour by the young and gay, but I believe, after all, his sincere worshippers are the old.” —I joined my friend in his walk, and as we quietly paced backward and forward together, he went on thus :—

“ When you came up, I was moralizing on the rapid change of inhabitants which had taken place, in the several houses of this neighbourhood, since I came to live in the street, about thirty years ago. In that period, every residence which you see has changed its master, except my own,—many of them several times. This mutation illustrates, perhaps, as strongly as any other thing, the instability of human affairs, and the différent caprices and fortunes of mankind. If you are disposed to indulge an old man’s frailty, I will give you a few instances from the scene before us.—*Garrire aniles ex re fabellas* is, you know, the privilege of gossiping age, ever since the days of Horace : and as you came on a work of charity, you must endure a little for conscience sake.

“ That large and showy mansion, on the left, was built by Dick Dashwell, who was a merchant, banker, broker, and speculator, on all subjects. While he fancied himself in a high tide of prosperity, he erected this splendid edifice ; and had it finished and furnished, in the most costly style, from London ;—alleging that nobody, on this side the Tweed, could make a chair fit to sit on. His wife, at the same time, set up her equipage,—had a gay villa near town,—gave brilliant parties,—and attempted to thrust herself forward

as a leader of the fashion. A gentleman at her table, one day, asking for a glass of Port, she said, there was no such liquor in that room,—but, if he wished much for it, there might be some used in the kitchen for sauces. I can still remember the airs of a lean frosty-visaged Frenchwoman, whom she got over as a governess for her children. Well;—this lasted but a few seasons; when the bubble burst, and all was at an end. Dick's merry-meetings were changed to sour meetings of creditors:—his splendid furniture was sold off at half price:—himself and his family dispersed, the Lord knows where:—and the fine mansion, being beyond the desires of any ordinary purchaser, became a public hotel.

“ The history of that house next to it, with the brass knocker, involves a tragic tale. It was possessed by Mr and Mrs Fleetwood;—the most amiable couple I ever knew, both in person and manners. They had been united by an early attachment, which Fortune at first forbade their indulging. At length she tempted them by a transient smile. Fleetwood engaged in a profession, where his genius and diligence gave promise of success. He ventured to marry. His children increased:—but his means increased also. In the confidence of youthful hope, he removed into this house; where his family presented a scene of domestic bliss. I have often heard him blame his own extravagance, in having so fine a mansion, but trust that Providence would order all for the best. Yet, while he played with his children,—and jocularly accused them of coming too fast,—a cloud would steal over

his brow, to think of the frail tenure of their prosperity. Alas ! these forebodings were too soon realized. Symptoms of consumption began to appear in his constitution, which were aggravated by labour and anxiety. The labour was intermitted, (though not without much inconvenience to his fortune);—but the anxiety increased with the disease, and urged it to a crisis. Happily, for himself, and for all, he was spared the needless discomfort of a distant voyage, (prescribed in ordinary medical routine, merely because nothing else can be thought of), and allowed to die at home, and in peace. He was carried off, in the prime of life, and the full exercise of his abilities and virtues ;—leaving his wife, and helpless family, to struggle with a hard world.

“ I mention but a few of the remarkable cases. Every-day changes would be tedious. Poor Fleetwood was succeeded by a course of common-place people,—the *Glaucumque*, *Medontaque*, *Thersilochumque* of the Epic poets,—who are unworthy of commemoration in these private annals.”

“ And pray,” said I, “ what may be the history of that mansion, directly over against us,—substantial, and complete, rather than splendid or gaudy ?”—“ That, Sir,” replied my friend, “ is an emblem of the prudent and thriving character of its first owner,—*videlicet*, Mr Abraham Dip, the tallow-chandler. This Worthy sojourned, from his youth upwards, in the Candlemaker Row, in the full steam and glitter of his calling. There, did he long oppose a determined resistance to all schemes of removal or gentility, on

the part of his wife, son, and daughter,—to whom the odour of the *Spring mellings* was an abomination. At length, however,—in the wane of life,—and after he had made a handsome fortune,—this greasy citizen was over-persuaded to migrate into the regions of the *beau monde*. Well do I remember him,—while the house was building by contract,—daily waddling over, to watch the progress of the work ;—seated on a stone ;—with his wig in one hand, and a handkerchief in the other, wiping his forehead. On removing hither, the ancient family warfare continued :—the wife, and younger branches, making awkward attempts at gentility :—the old man plodding, in a spacious apartment, with gilded sofas, and festooned curtains, as closely as he had done, in his former den of eight feet square. At length he died ;—and young hopeful came to his kingdom. The funeral, I recollect, filled the whole street ; and, if the old man could look up and see it, must have formed the first act of his penance. His epitaph still remains in the Greyfriars' church-yard,—blown up with all the superlatives of the Latin tongue,—and tracing his descent from ancient Thanes and Chieftains. As for the son, he exactly realized the poet's allegory of the Reservoir and Fountain ; and spouted away his father's store, so effectually, that, in less than a year, the house came to the hammer.

“ This mansion, on our right, belonged to that foolish widow Mrs Foible. I call her foolish,—though she was really a very clever woman,—because her folly fairly got the better of her wit. I dare say, you remember her, living in a rational and pleasant way in this

very house. She had been married early to a superannuated invalid, who left her his whole fortune. She mixed much with the world ; lived hospitably ; and made her house the centre of an agreeable society. She was kind to her husband's relations ; generous to her own ; and charitable to all. Amidst so much rational happiness, there was introduced to her house a certain Ensign Beverley, who had nothing to recommend him but his pair of colours, and a well-turned leg. This youth,—thinking a speculation on the widow better than his hopes of promotion,—found means to gain her favour ; and, in less than two months from their first acquaintance, he led her to the altar, amidst the exclamations of an admiring world. Every interjection of the vocabulary was exhausted, for the usual space of nine days ;—and then things returned to their old course. At this auspicious union, the respective ages of the parties were *nineteen* and *fifty-seven* : and that nothing might be wanting to the heroism of her confiding love, the widow put her whole fortune in his power. The youth behaved decently to her, for a fortnight ;—but, soon after, broke all terms ;—ran through her money in a couple of years ;—and then scampered off to join his regiment in the West Indies ;—leaving the widow to her meditations. Her fine house, equipage, and furniture were sold ; and she took refuge in a hovel, in the southern suburbs of our city, where she soon after died. I saw her, a short time before this event, in the view of giving her some little help ;—when she assured me, that,

were the thing still undone, she would do it again, for the sake of her dear Tom.

“ She was succeeded, in her house, by the pious Lady Tremble, the Methodist ; who set herself down among us heré, I believe, to reclaim us from our evil ways. Nothing could be a greater metamorphosis than the house now exhibited, compared with its aspect under the widow. Instead of gay equipages and liveries, at the door, all day long,—the chief visitors were on foot, and in black clothes. The hour of dinner was changed from six to three : and, as regularly as the clock struck five, her Ladyship’s carriage drove up, to take her to the evening exercise. The doors were finally locked at ten,—exactly the time that the widow used to blaze forth for the night. This continued, however, only a year or two ; for the good Lady, finding us a stiff-necked generation, despaired of making any impression among us, and removed to some more hopeful scene.

“ You observe yon large and elegant house, near the corner. That lodged the family of the Selwyns, whom I am sure you must recollect. Distinguished equally for wealth, liberality, and merit,—numerous in themselves,—connected, by alliance, with many great families,—universally respected and beloved,—they were, for many years, the most figuring people in Edinburgh ;—and had struck out their roots, so wide and deep, that you would have thought them fixed for ages. Now,—without any calamity, or change of fortune,—far less the slightest shade of blame ;—but merely by a succession of small and ordinary casualties,

—and the unceasing ebb and flow of human things, —the family have, one after another, disappeared; and, in a few years, their very name will be forgotten in our city.

“ That house, so neatly finished of hewn stone, with a carved portico and *veranda*, was the work of poor Ned Easy; whose little history displays an alternation of extremes not usual in common life. He was born to small fortune; but, by prudence and favourable accidents, he acquired an independence, pretty early in life. He was a single man, and of a social turn, which it was his great pleasure to indulge, in a quiet hospitality, with every thing snug about him. To that end, he built the house which you see; and took pride in bringing it to a scrupulous perfection, in all points. His furniture,—his library,—his cabinet of curiosities,—every thing, in short, from the garret to the cellar,—was finished with the most elaborate neatness: And he used to expatiate on the many happy contrivances and adaptations which had been hit upon, by his own ingenuity. He had, however, settled himself here but a short time, when his affairs became involved, through some good-natured imprudences; and, after struggling hard to put off the evil day, he found it necessary to expose the house, and its contents, to sale. Poor Ned was of a kind and lively complexion, but little fortitude. To part with these treasures cost him more pain than all the other consequences of his misfortunes. He set about the preparations for sale, with a heavy heart;—when, just as all was ready for the hammer, accounts came of his having drawn a

prize in the lottery, which brought him quite round again. I shall never forget the alacrity with which he countermanded the arrangements for classing, inventorying, and valuing. He gave a dinner to his friends, on this happy change, at which I assisted ;—and his festivity and transport rose to a pitch as extreme as his former depression. He would not part with us, till past twelve o'clock ; and I went home, moralizing with myself on the excess of feeling displayed by my friend. Alas ! how vain had been both his grief and joy. I heard, in the morning, that he was seized with a high fever,—partly brought on,—and much inflamed,—by the excitement and agitation of his spirits. The disease baffled all the powers of medicine : and, on the third day, he died. Poor Ned was conveyed, from his spacious mansion, to the narrow house of *six* by *two* ; and the sale of his moveables actually took place on the very day that had been formerly advertised.

“ That large ornamented house, with the double columns, was built by Mr Monsoon the nabob,—being the fourth he had possessed within six months. All the arts of architecture and design were exhausted, to make it perfect ; and he declared that it should rival the luxury of Calcutta, in all but the flat roof, and colonnades to defend from the sun. After every thing was finished, he discovered, to his inexpressible mortification, that he had forgot a *Refrigeratory*, or Cooling Room, after the hot bath. He forthwith sold the house for half value, and proceeded to contrive another, under happier auspices.

“ This little mansion, which we have just passed, affords room for pleasanter reflections than most of the others. It belonged to a worthy family, who lived in the even tenor of creditable unostentatious diligence. In this way, the progress of time gradually added to their means ;—and as the family became too numerous for this abode, they have now removed to a better.

“ But I should tire you, were I to go through all the *memorabilia* of the neighbourhood. It is sufficient to say, that of all who were occupants at my first settling here, not one now remains but myself. Some, by error in the first design ;—others, by subsequent caprice, or change of fortune ;—some, by outgrowing their houses ;—others, by their houses outgrowing them ;—all have, in one way or another, disappeared ;—and, in the pathetic language of Scripture, “ the place “ which knew them knows them no more.’ ”

“ I thank you, my good Sir,” said I, “ for your narrative. I really had not before considered how striking a moral lesson could be drawn from so ordinary a subject. The pictures you have sketched are not flattering : But, whether we contemplate the public or private story of mankind, I fear it is chiefly made up of follies or misfortunes,—and moves only ridicule or compassion. You remember the pretty expression of Vincent Bourne, *Sunt res humanæ flebile ludibrium.*”

C. AN UNSEASONABLE MAN.

Decipimur specie recti.

Hœa.

It is an old observation, that the best men are not always the most agreeable. This applies not merely to a deficiency in the powers of entertainment, but to a certain want of tact, by which some people contrive to make themselves permanently disagreeable, in spite of many virtues. Such individuals,—though perhaps worthy of all praise in discharging the duties of life,—and capable, when opportunity offers, of high exertions of kindness and generosity,—will yet, in the daily intercourse of society, inflict a thousand petty annoyances, merely from want of consideration for times and seasons. Trusting to their solid merits, they are apt to indulge themselves in those smaller licenses; without reflecting that the opportunity of conferring great benefits occurs but seldom, and reaches but a few, while the petty offences, “which render “life unsweet,” happen every day, and all day long. Minute though they be, they occur so frequently, that a person may, in this way, inflict more pain than he ever can redeem by important services. It was a saying of Lord Chesterfield,—not the less just, in its proper application, because he carried its principle to abuse,—that the best-bred man was commonly the best natured.

It is not a mere knowledge of the conventional forms of behaviour, used by the higher classes of society, that constitutes good breeding. It is the art of making others pleased, and avoiding what gives them pain :—The art of doing common things with a grace, and adding to a favour by the delicacy with which it is conferred :—This is the essence of true politeness ;—and may exist in a peasant, while it is wanting in a prince.

Moliere, in his comedy of the *Misanthrope*, has portrayed, with the finest touches of his moral pencil, a character of this sort, who chooses to make himself disagreeable on system. He disdains yielding to the usages of society, in the most indifferent matters ; but must tell his mind bluntly, on every subject, and every person, that comes in his way. For this exhibition Moliere has been censured by Rousseau,—as throwing a discredit on truth and sincerity. But this last finished *charlatan* made an affectation of bluntness, and rude republican virtue, one of his claims to distinction ;—and found this to take well amidst the polished uniformity of Parisian manners. The *Petits Maitres* and *Mesdemoiselles* of that capital stared at him, as they would have done at a polar bear :—and to be stared at was his *sum-mum bonum*. The good sense of the *contem-plateur* Moliere, taught him the folly of carrying virtue to an extreme, in trifles ; and unnecessarily wounding the harmless self-love of others. He meant not to recommend any falsehood which actually deceives. He meant not even to recommend the artificial re-

finement, and petty dissimulation, of modern manners, when in excess. And accordingly, in that very comedy, he has brought these qualities into most amusing, and by no means favourable, contrast, with the bluntness of his plain-dealer. But if every one told his mind of every other, in his own presence, there would be an end of society. We may lawfully suppress our opinions,—or even soften down their colouring a shade or two,—in order to live in harmony with our fellow creatures. We otherwise pay too dear even for truth itself. We sacrifice one real and important virtue to a needless extravagance in another.

There are, however, persons who err, in this respect, less from system than from nature. We sometimes meet with a character whom I may call the UNSEASONABLE MAN. Such a person is born with a downright honesty,—joined to a certain callousness of feeling,—and absence of tact,—which disables him from foreseeing what will hurt others ; and makes him unconscious when he does so. He has no sense of times or circumstances. When invited to a wedding, he will turn the conversation on unfortunate marriages ;—and takes the occasion of a funeral to reckon up the failings of the deceased. He will tell old stories in presence of a waning beauty,—and appeal to her to vouch the particulars. If he be in company with a new-made peer, he enlarges on the abuse of patronage, and the upstart pretensions of a *parvenu*. When at a city feast, he is very facetious on the guzzling of bailies and aldermen :—and never fails to entertain his physician with hints on the quackery and imposture of

the healing art. If, on such occasions, he happen to perceive his mistake, he is sure to make matters worse by a clumsy apology.

My friend Mr Mar-all belongs to this variety of our species. Though a man of real humanity, he gives pain, twenty times a-day, by choosing topics, or uttering remarks, out of place. Although he does this from mere absence of mind, and insensibility of temperament,—such is his curious infelicity,—so significantly ill-timed are his mistakes,—that he often gets credit for deliberate malice. I fell into company with him, at a friend's table, soon after commencing these my periodical instructions. This was a topic not particularly delicate or well-chosen, to broach in my presence,—but he began upon it without delay.—“ I am told, Sir,” said he, “ that your papers don't sell.”—“ I hope then, Sir,” returned I, “ that you will assist them, a little by your custom.”—“ Why, no Sir,—I have no time to mind such things. But I meant no offence.”—“ None in the world, Sir.—Pray, may I ask whether you have read any of them ?”—“ No, Sir.”—“ I am sorry for that ;—for I would have been bold to crave your opinion.”—“ Why, Sir, it would have done you little service.—The truth is, that the ground is overstocked.—No room for any thing new, in that way, now-a-days.”—“ O, Sir, excuse me :—Odd characters will bolt up occasionally.”—This remark caused a half-smile in some of the company ; but was listened to, with perfect unconsciousness, by Mr Mar-all. He, soon after, addressed a lady, at some distance. “ I am sorry, Madam, to learn that you have been disappoint

ed in a legacy from old Lady Fatland.—I hear she died very rich.”—The party addressed, in great embarrassment, muttered something about — “ Never having any expectations :—her motives were entirely disinterested friendship for her dear departed”—— “ Indeed, ma’am,” said he, “ it was very provoking :—after waiting so long, and working so hard, for it too.”—A little after, turning to a gentleman near him,— “ Pray, Sir, how are your friend Mr Overtrade’s affairs likely to turn out ?—I hear but so so :—and they tell ugly stories too about embezzlements, and so forth.”—“ I beg your pardon, Sir :—No such thing, I assure you :—You have been misinformed :—We expect a considerable reversion.”—“ Aye :—that’s what they always say, at first.”

A very pretty young creature was sitting nearly opposite to him. “ My dear,” said he, “ I fear you apply to the rouge box.” This observation called up a suffusion in her cheeks, which plainly disproved the charge. There was, however, unluckily, sitting near her, a fair one, whose performances, in that way, are more than suspected. “ Well,” said he, smiling, “ I believe I am wrong, as to you at least. Indeed, it is only excusable in those who must supply, by art, the decays of nature.” If any one made an application of this, it was not the speaker,—who uttered it quite unconsciously.

During an after pause in the conversation, he suddenly broke forth. “ By-the-by—this is a sad affair between Major Scabbard and Mrs Lightheel.—Five children, they say, and a very affectionate hus-

band.—The Major, too, admitted into the family as a bosom friend.” I saw our host and hostess sitting on thorns,—a lady in company being a near relation of the parties. In vain, did they cast significant looks at Mr Mar-all. In vain, ask him to drink a glass of wine. In vain, try to turn the conversation, by every device of new topic, or sudden interruption. All would not do.—He stuck to his point. He did not bate us a single step through the whole suit of divorce;—with a running commentary, of his own, on all the shining passages. Just as he had concluded, he turned his eye on the lady I have mentioned:—and, lest any one should have overlooked the awkwardness,—exclaimed,—“Bless me, Madam, I ask your pardon. I really did not observe you before,—otherwise I would not have introduced so disagreeable a subject.”

Our landlord,—by way of covering this awkward retreat,—asked him to take a dram. “It is excellent Highland whisky, I assure you, and worthy your acquaintance.”—“O we have been long acquainted:—It was that which you got from the Highland smuggler. You remember, how nearly you were caught by the Exciseman,—and how you consulted me about getting through the scrape.”—“Hush!—hush!”—said our host:—“Take off your glass, and tell no tales.”

In the above observations of Mr Mar-all, there was nothing morally wrong,—nothing ill intended. But they gave unnecessary pain: and therefore should have been avoided.

Nobody has such a gift as Mr Mar-all at performing the part of what is vulgarly called a *wet blanket* ; —especially in any thing requiring delicacy of management. I remember being at a public meeting with him, where the Chairman had acted in such a manner as to attract the general approbation. The thanks of the meeting were moved to him, and received, by the company, with acclamation : and he was just rising to make his acknowledgments, when Mr Mar-all suddenly bolted up, to second the motion of thanks. He straightway got into a long, dull, rambling dissertation, about every thing but the point in hand. The company yawned,—whispered,—looked their watches,—and at length began to drop off : so that before the unlucky Chairman could get out a word, there was scarcely any body left to hear him, except Mr Mar-all, myself, and the clerk. The Chairman afterwards hinted to me that Mr Mar-all had acted, on this occasion, from downright malice ; but I assured him that our friend was only UNSEASONABLE.

CL. THE ARBITRATION.

Nostrum est, tantas componere lites.

HOR.

MANY are the letters which I have received, making inquiries after my name,—the name and situation of my country seat,—and my place of abode in town. In these investigations my fair correspondents are the most urgent ;—many of them declaring that they never can properly edify from moral lessons till they know whence they come ;—and asking me, withal, what I should think of a play being performed behind the curtain. Most of these pretty inquisitors, however, fail not, at the same time, to hint, that my assumed veil is too thin for concealment,—that they are at no loss to discover who I am,—and who are my several neighbours in the country :—That, under the disguise of my Lady Evergreen, Mr Megrim, Mr Hazy, and so forth, it is easy to detect Mrs A., Mr B., Mr C., and others with whom they are well acquainted :—so that, in truth, it is mere affectation to preserve my *incognito* any longer. Such, indeed, is the confidence of these fair scribes, that I have sometimes felt half alarmed for detection ;—till I was re-assured by observing that they all fixed on different spots for my residence, and gave my characters different representatives,—as the scene of their own acquaintance happened to lie. Now, as neither my

person, nor my place of abode, can well be more than one, I think the chance is that all are mistaken.

On these important subjects then, I must, for the present, continue that prudent reserve which I have hitherto maintained. Whether the course of events may not hereafter permit me to be more explicit, time will show. But, in the mean while, all that I can venture to disclose,—for the gratification of my curious readers,—and in explanation of what is to follow,—is, that my present abode, in this city, is in one of those streets, which, within these few years, have *risen like an exhalation* towards the northern outskirts of our ancient metropolis;—and which, in their building, occupation, and furnishing,—have indicated an increase in population, and substantial wealth, rapid and wonderful, beyond all former experience. This demand for domestic architecture, has occasioned a great influx of those who fill the various callings subservient to that useful art,—such as masons, house-carpenters, plumbers, glaziers, &c.;—and it gives me pleasure to remark, that their increase of numbers has been attended with a proportional amendment in their dress, and general appearance. To see the labouring classes somewhat nice and careful in their persons, houses, and other accommodations, is,—as I formerly remarked,—one of the most agreeable symptoms of their welfare;—for they do not begin to think of such things, till their first wants are tolerably supplied. This is still more the case with a sedate and thinking people like my countrymen,—not much given to outward show,—nor disposed to sacrifice solid comfort to

vanity. Nor has the amendment in their external appearance been unaccompanied with an equal advance in their intellectual culture.

The position of my mansion gives me the daily opportunity of witnessing the progress of building, on every side. This is a work which I like to contemplate. It is pleasing to remark the union of so many minds and hands towards the completion of a useful, beautiful, and permanent creation. It is an exemplification of the power, foresight, and skill of man, which have so much changed and improved the face of this world. The stock or capital accumulated in a country, in the shape of good habitations, is one of the most useful and lasting of any. I have heard my worthy townsmen censured for the sumptuousness of their domestic accommodation. We are certainly lodged here in a style of elegance, in proportion to our fortunes, greater than elsewhere. But if this be a luxury, it is surely one of the most reasonable and excusable;—as our spacious and well-aired apartments conduce to health at least as much as to vanity.

Be this as it may, however, the architectural operations in my neighbourhood, as I have said, afford me no small amusement. I often contemplate, from my window, the proceedings of the workmen for hours together;—watch their regular going and coming, at the time of meals;—witness their merriment, and practical jokes on each other, as they disperse or re-assemble;—and admire the neatness, and steady advance, of the work, while they are engaged. My little nephew is a sworn ally of theirs; and spends many

intervals of school hours in helping, or rather perhaps hindering, their operations. Indeed, I often stop and speak to them myself, on going out or coming in,—so that a sort of acquaintance has grown up between us.

Some time ago, one of the working carpenters called on me, and said he had a favour to ask. There had arisen, it seems, some difference between the master-builder and them, about the terms of their engagement: They wished to avoid the law: And if I would do them the kindness, (he said), they had a desire to submit the matter to my decision. I asked whether their master had agreed to this; to which the young man answered in the affirmative. "But," said I, "though I was bred to the law, I have no pretensions to being a lawyer;—so I fear I am scarcely qualified to judge between you."—"O,"—replied he,—you will do all that we want, very well. If we are satisfied, you know, Sir, that's enough."—"Well," returned I, "if plain justice, and common sense, will do,—I may perhaps serve your turn: And if my opinion be little worth, it shall cost you as little:—That is one advantage, at least, it will have over the law."—"When will your honour be at leisure?"—"Why, I suppose, your case will not be attended with writings."—"Yes, Sir:—there are one or two letters between us, which it is proper you should see."—"Well,—send me the letters this evening. Let your master,—and one or two of you, to speak for the rest,—come to me to-morrow morning, at Ten o'clock, when you return from breakfast. I believe I shall not keep you long."

On the morning in question, the parties were punctual to their hour. The case was distinctly stated, *viva voce*, on both sides; and mutual explanations of the letters given. As often happens to a third party, judging between those engaged,—I saw, at once, that there was a fair *middle term* of compromise,—which, either their mutual bias had kept concealed from them,—or the fear of conceding too much had mutually prevented them from allowing. When explained by me, they were satisfied that it was the reasonable course; and I had the good fortune to end the dispute without displeasing either party.

A day or two afterwards, the young man who had first applied to me, came and said, that he and his fellows were much obliged by the trouble I had taken; and that they wished to make me some acknowledgment for it;—"What!" said I, "are you too proud to receive so small a favour?"—"No, Sir," said he, "it is not that;—but we wish to show, that we are sensible of your kindness."—"My good friend," said I, "I do not blame such a feeling;—nor even a little of that honest pride which scorns to be obliged. It is a creditable sentiment in your station,—as well as in every other;—and has always distinguished our countrymen. But here there is no room for it. The favour was nothing;—and, I told you from the first,—was to cost you nothing. No, no,—never think of it."—As he still seemed reluctant to go,—and said that they would be disappointed if I would not consent to take something,—I pointed to a small book-shelf which hung against the wainscot, and asked how much it

would cost. He answered, about four or five shillings. "Well," said I, "since you are so scrupulous, you shall make me such a thing as that:—But if it be one jot better,—or of greater value,—I positively will not accept of it."—"Well, Sir," said he, "you shall have your own way.—It shall be exactly the same:—and every one of us will have a hand in it."—"Let it be so," said I,—“and I assure you, I shall estimate it, not by its intrinsic value, but by the motive from which it was given.”

The book-shelf was accordingly made, and now ornaments my study, over against the CABINET. My friends adhered strictly to terms, as to the materials, and general appearance of the article: but had evidently bestowed a little *extra* finish on the workmanship. The incident, though in other respects trifling, I think worth notice, as illustrating that feeling of honest pride, and rational independence, which prevails among our people. This spirit is so far from being inconsistent with a reasonable respect towards the higher orders of society, that I believe they are always united. One of the worst effects of an ill-managed system of poor laws is, that the lower classes, ceasing to respect themselves, become careless of their manners, and insolent to their superiors. It generates, on the one side, ingratitude for what is received, with insatiable demands for more;—and, on the other, a grudging of what is given, and constant fears of imposition. This contest between demand and resistance, destroys that mutual good-will which should unite all classes. The upper ranks of society become

offended and repulsive ;—the lower, at once degraded and insolent. Nothing is more painful than to see, among the latter, that look of sulky distrust or defiance, which seems ready, at once, to give and to take offence. A well-ordered mind is prepared both to claim respect, and to yield it where it is due. Nobody likes less than myself to see an over-obsequiousness or servility among the lower classes. And I speak it to the praise of the generality of my own countrymen, that, when properly treated, their behaviour has more of natural politeness than of submission, and blends, in a very becoming manner, respect with independence.

CII. A PARTY OF PLEASURE ON THE WATER.

Navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere.

HOR.

IT is not to be told how much trouble men wilfully inflict upon themselves, in the pursuit of pleasure. Sometimes they will squeeze into a theatre, at the risk of being bruised or stifled, to hear an Italian *Bravura*,—when they would have more real satisfaction in a milk-maid's ditty. Sometimes they will stand, "till their feet throb, and their heads thump," in the lobbies of a certain Honourable House ; and listen to the soul of Demosthenes effused on a turnpike act. Sometimes they will mount on horseback, and get

themselves jolted and jumbled at a fox-chase,—with, now and then, a leg or a neck broken, for variety,—and yet never come within sight of the brush. Sometimes they take a farm in the country, by way of amusing their leisure :—Sometimes learn a new language, for the purpose of reading a scurvy poem :—Sometimes travel fifty miles to see an old wall :—And sometimes form PARTIES OF PLEASURE ON THE WATER.

This last variety of delight was lately brought home to my business and bosom, by my having been an unfortunate partaker therein. From the commencement of this present summer, my worthy sister has been throwing out hints, how agreeable it would be to make an excursion on the Frith of Forth,—visit Inchkeith, and some of the other islands,—and take a nearer peep of the coast of Fife, whose rich uplands invited us every day from our windows. In this project she was powerfully seconded by her nephew Master Harry ;—and I observe that when they unite their force in the family, they usually contrive to carry their point. Not that I would have my readers suppose that I am either hen-pecked, or chicken-pecked ;—or that I cannot exert my authority on a proper occasion ;—but I am open to argument ;—and the poor child is really so reasonable, and so persuasive,—that, in short,—somehow or other,—the thing comes about. Besides, in the present design, my sister had engaged, on her side, divers of her friends, who were to be of the party. These kept up against me, by platoons or single files, so steady a fire, that I was at last overcome. I left the choice of the party to Judith ;—only stipulating

that Mr Acid should be one,—to help me to take a little vengeance for the sufferings which I too surely foreboded on the adventure. This proposal was demurred to by my sister, but I was peremptory.

Accordingly, on the day appointed,—having secured a boat,—and laid in a due provision of cold fowls, tongues, pasties, and other *consumables*, common on such occasions,—we assembled to embark, at the village of Newhaven, all resolved to be as happy as possible. My little boy was truly so, without resolving any thing about the matter,—and his happiness formed the chief part of mine.

On reaching the place of rendezvous, the first object we perceived was a hackney-coach trundling up, in the depth of which lurked our friend Mrs Bustle, amidst a store of cloaks, cowls, books, maps, spy-glasses, and other appurtenances, which might have furnished out a West India voyage. On inquiring the use of all this, she said, she really thought, when one was going to sea, in this manner, that one should take a few accommodations to make things agreeable;—and, in particular, that *Cook's Voyages*, which she had brought, were very proper reading for people while at sea. There was no room, however, in our boat, for half of her cargo; so it was returned as it came, under many injunctions to the hackney-coachman.

On mustering our forces, we found two of the party a-wanting, Miss Primley and Mr Dawdle. The lady, being nice in her toilette, had hesitated so long between her pink pelisse and her blue, that the time had slipped away. Mr Dawdle was late of rising in the

morning,—and had appointed that day to meet a friend from the country,—and had then waited for his tailor,—and had afterwards gone out to look at the newspapers (which not having finished, he had put in his pocket),—by all which entanglements he was detained a full hour after his time. When he arrived, he discovered that he had forgot his great-coat, and his snuff-box;—and begged we would wait till he sent back to town for them. This motion was, however, clamorously overruled:—Mr Acid promising him an occasional pinch, on good behaviour.

By this time, the tide had so far ebbed, as to increase the difficulties of embarkation. In the active movements, therein required, the ladies had an availing help in Mr Edward Constant, who was of our party. The pier was wet and slippery;—so that we had to be supported, on each side, by the sailors;—and scuttled and sprawled along, like cats shod with walnuts, till we were severally hoisted into the boat. Then came numerous complaints of wet shoes and petticoats bedraggled. Among other casualties, in shipping our stores, a noble pasty, (technically denominated a *Veal Florentine*,) tumbled overboard; but was rescued with no further damage than a bath in the salt water.

We were now fairly afloat; but had not proceeded far, when it was intimated that some of our tackling was amiss;—which obliged us to bear away for Leith Harbour, to refit. This wasted another good hour; and, besides the unpleasantness of delay, excited many forebodings of evil,—and late hours,—and want of time

to complete our plans. Some vented their indignation on the carelessness of our skipper: while Mr Acid, by way of set-off, threw in a few hints on the delays of our own party. At length, however, matters were adjusted, and forth we fared for the second time.

Our passage to the Island of Inchkeith was short; and, as the weather was favourable, this proved the *halcyon* part of our voyage. At the debarkation, however, Mrs Bustle complained heavily of the want of her spy-glass, and chart of the island; while Miss Primley made a thousand scruples, as to the mode of being assisted on shore by the sailors. One of the crew, a stout Yorkshire-man, seeing her dilemma, said, "Why look ye, Mistress,—if so be, you are afraid of wetting them paper shoes, I'll take you ashore on my back." This proposition, however, was rejected with horror:—so, after many shifts and contrivances, she was supported along a plank, and fairly set a-ground.

We first visited the Lighthouse, and admired the curious mechanism by which the lights are made to revolve,—alternately appearing and disappearing to the eye of the distant mariner,—and thus affording him, in the darkest night, an index through the pathless deep. We were no less pleased with the neatness and good order in which every thing was kept, and with the civility of the keepers;—and after contemplating the noble prospect from the external gallery round the light-room, at the summit, (where Mrs Bustle was gratified with a telescope), we began to discuss the serious business of dinner. Mr Acid and myself would fain have profited by the hospitality of the

Lighthouse-keeper, who offered us a room, with the convenience of chairs and tables. But this was exploded by the general voice, as unsuitable on a party of pleasure ;—while dining on the verdant turf would be so *champêtre*. On the turf, accordingly, we dined ;—but the grass being rather damp, some of the party, before all was over, felt but “ ill at ease behind,”—and would have given up all their pastoral sensibilities for a well stuffed chair. To this must be added an occasional visit from a worm, a snail, or an earwig, who came to see who intruded on their premises. All this was, however, got over, (along with the dinner), and again we prepared to tempt the dangerous deep :—when, lo !—Mr Dawdle was a-missing. Scouts were dispatched in every direction, and the echoes were startled with his name. At length he was found, snugly niched in the crevice of a rock, reading his newspaper ;—and on being called, declared that he had no notion we were in any hurry.

As we got afloat, a difference arose touching the next object of our destination ;—whether we should visit the coast of Fife,—or make directly for the island of Inchcolm. Various arguments were urged, *pro* and *con* ; till at length the skipper ended the debate, by informing us, that the wind had chopped about to the north-east, which made the approach to Fife impossible. Meanwhile the gale freshened, and meeting the ebbing tide, raised such a wave as tumbled us to and fro, like a cockle-shell. The spray dashed over the bow ; and thus at once bedewed us from above, and kept our footing wet underneath. The sea was now running high ; and would some-

times hoist us on the top of a wave,—sometimes leave us sprawling in the gulf between,—while the broken water kept hissing and popping round the gunwale of our boat. A landsman, on such occasions, feels the additional pain of uncertainty,—and does not know when to interfere. The danger now seemed considerable; and I desired the skipper to take in the sail. This he, for some time, treated with scorn; but at last I was peremptory:—While Mr Edward Constant supported me, by threatening the vengeance of the law; and unfolded the edict *Nautæ, Caupones, Stabularii*;—which, he averred, would make the skipper liable for our full value, in case we were drowned. The Latin words, I saw, produced a great effect: and our sturdy *Palinurus* became more manageable.

The gale afterwards abated, but the swell and roll continuing, as the Demon of Terror retired, that of Sickness approached. To describe his ravages on our genteel and well-ordered party would be too cruel; so I must leave the scene to the fancy or experience of my readers. To add to our calamities, it now began to rain. We at length reached Inchcolm:—but all thoughts of enjoying the picturesque,—or admiring the ruins of the ancient Abbey, dedicated to the Saint of the Isle,—had by this time evaporated. Our party,—cold, wet, and sick,—had lost every other sentiment in an eager longing to get home: and measured, with dreary anticipation, the watery gulf which still separated us from the main land. We again required, however, to halt for some repairs; and were fain to huddle together into the house of the keeper of the

Battery erected on this inland. Here we formed a rueful assemblage. Poor Miss Primley, in particular, exhibited a sad contrast from the splendours of the morning. She sat in most forlorn case, attempting to dry the beautiful pelisse. Her faithless parasol, being of imperfect dye, had let through the rain upon her, in verdant drops, by which she was speckled all over :—so that, in her sea-green and bedraggled aspect, you might have mistaken her for a disconsolate mermaid.

After some delay, we again embarked, with the view of making the best of our way home. The rain still continued, and darkness was coming on ; but, owing to unfavourable currents, we made little way ; and, after tossing about for some time, were told that it was in vain to attempt making Newhaven harbour that night. We had therefore nothing better for it, than to alter our course, and run into the little port of Cra-mond, about five miles from Edinburgh. Here, at length, we were disembarked, in woful plight. My poor little boy,—whose mercurial spirits had kept him up a long while,—now lay in my arms like a log, unable to speak or move from sickness ; and most of the party fared little better. On landing, we could find no conveyance to town. We therefore dispatched a man and horse for coaches. But Mr Acid and myself, by way of securing matters, stoutly set off for the town on foot. Mr Dawdle made a show of offering to accompany us,—but, on second thoughts, preferred staying, along with Mr Edward Constant, to escort the ladies. Just before we took leave, I said to Mr Acid,—“ You remember Dr Johnson’s definition of a ship.”—“ Yes,” said he, “ but it wants something to

make it complete. I would amend it thus. *A prison ;—with the certainty of being sick,—and the chance of being drowned.*" A responsive sigh from the whole party,—approaching to the nature of a groan,—testified their assent to the Doctor's *dictum*, as amended.

CIII. FORTITUDE BECOMING IN THE FEMALE CHARACTER.

STORY OF LADY HERBERT.

Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis.

HOR.

Tu ne cede malis,—sed contra audentior ito.

VIRG.

I HAVE been reproached by several of my fair correspondents with paying too little attention to their sex in my speculations. The greatest of my predecessors is held up to me, at once as a contrast, and an example. In his pages, it is said, the pursuits and engagements of the female sex,—their dress, amusements, and visitings,—are made the subject of frequent commentary. I am asked, if I think my countrywomen of the present day less worthy of regard than they were in the days of the *Spectator* ;—or if I pretend to airs of superiority which were not assumed by an *Addison* ?

To both these charges I plead not guilty. Indeed, if I have erred in this particular, my error has arisen

from a cause directly opposite. The female sex in this island, about a century ago, were so far below their daughters of the present day, in education and habits of life, that they might be addressed on subjects, and in a tone of instruction, which would now be unseasonable and ridiculous. Their intellectual culture was then very limited ; and their occupations were chiefly confined to the cares of housewifery, and the gratification of a frivolous vanity. Accordingly, the manner in which they are spoken to, and of, in the *Spectator*, though kind and indulgent, is far from respectful. They are treated rather like giddy or forward children, than like persons to be seriously reasoned with. He would be a bold man who presumed, now-a-days, to address the sex in such a tone ; and might find disciples fit to criticise, and even instruct their master. One cause, no doubt, of the present intellectual advancement of women, was the instruction given by Addison himself,—who contributed, perhaps, more than any other English author, to refine our domestic manners. But the vast increase which has attended his culture renders the task of his successors far more difficult than his own.

Still, though I give just praise to my fair countrywomen, I will not affirm that they are absolutely perfect. There is a tendency in over-refined manners to soften too much ; and to unfit the mind for the exercise of the hardier virtues, which thrive best under a rude and simple culture. The habits of modern society are perhaps unfavourable to the acquisition of a proper strength of mind, in both sexes. Where a

woman has bestowed all her cares on dress and amusement,—and the routine of fashionable pleasure,—she will find herself ill prepared for the serious difficulties of life, should her lot ever call her to encounter them.

“If all the year were sunshine holidays,” (to use the words of Shakspeare,)—if youth felt no decay,—and the concerns of a polite gallantry formed the sole business of life,—women might be indulged in the dreams of love and conquest, sketched by poets, and allowed to believe that their frowns or smiles governed the destinies of mankind. This is very well in the morning of their days :—but when they undertake the duties of wives and mothers, the scene is changed. It is then that their character undergoes the severest test, and reaches the highest elevation. If, by a fate not unusual in married life, they be left widows, with families to bring up,—often on slender means, and assisted by little support or advice,—they will require (as indeed they often show), all the firmness, prudence, and decision which belong to the other sex. They then find themselves destined to a more painful, but far loftier, vocation, than being the objects of a polished courtesy, or the companions of an hour of dalliance.

With the view of illustrating these reflections, I will present my fair readers with the following narrative :—declaring, at the same time, my firm belief that there are many of the sex now living,—and of my own acquaintance,—who would, in similar circumstances, discover qualities as great as those which I am about to describe.

STORY OF LADY HERBERT.

In the romantic expedition made by our Charles I. into Spain, when Prince of Wales, to see the Infanta Isabella, who had been proposed to him for a bride, he was accompanied, or followed, by some young Englishmen of rank, who were smitten, like their prince, with the chivalrous spirit of the times. Among these the most eminent, next to the imperious favourite Buckingham himself, was Sir Edward Herbert,—(a kinsman of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and of the sweet and pious poet of the same name,)—then a youth of three-and-twenty,—distinguished equally by his personal and mental graces,—excelling in all martial exercises,—and uniting in his character that mixture of hardihood and gentleness which formed an accomplished cavalier.

Sir Walter Aston was then resident at the Spanish Court, under the Earl of Bristol, who had been sent, on a special mission, to negotiate the Royal Marriage. Sir Walter was related to the great Earl of Strafford, whose tragical end afterwards added a deeper shade to the fates of his unfortunate master. Sir Walter's eldest daughter, known in the phrase of that period by the name of *Mistress Amabel Aston*, was esteemed the most charming woman of her time; and celebrated, in masques and court poems, as the *Rose of England*. She then resided with her father at Madrid: and it may well be supposed that such an object,—then in the first bloom of youth and loveliness,—would make a deep impression on the gay and

gallant company who were assembled at the Court of Spain. Even Prince Charles himself was struck ; and it was whispered among the Court talkers that the beauty of the Infanta herself grew dim in his eyes, when compared with the charms of his fair countrywoman. But Charles was a man of prudence, and of virtue. He saw that it would be improper to offer his hand to the daughter of a subject ; and he would not urge his passion on other terms. Among all this noble assemblage, the person preferred by the fair Mabel was Sir Edward Herbert. Indeed, the merits and attractions of both were so conspicuous, that they were at once destined for each other by the public voice. Charles approved of the union ; and some time afterwards, on the return of Sir William Aston's family to England, the Prince dignified the nuptials by his presence.

It is well known that this youthful expedition into Spain produced no result connected with its object ;—and that Charles afterwards chose for his bride the daughter of the illustrious Henry IV. of France. He succeeded to his father about two years after the period when our story begins ; and Sir Edward and Lady Herbert continued to be distinguished by his favour, and were among the brightest ornaments of his Court. The sunshine of his prosperity, however, lasted but a few years. Clouds arose, and thickened on every side. At length the tempest broke with ungovernable fury,—and involved him, and all whom he loved, in one common ruin.

I do not propose entering into the thorny question,

whether Charles or his subjects were guilty of innovation ;—and which deserved most blame for the evils that ensued. My own opinion is, that, whatever faults may be imputable to either side, in particular instances, the general progress of events was inevitable. That Charles, on the one hand, designed to introduce a more despotic rule than had been practically exercised by his predecessors Elizabeth, Mary, and Henry, I see no proof. But, on the other hand, his subjects were not to blame in desiring a freer constitution than they had enjoyed under those princes. Beneath their violent and undefined prerogative, neither the life, nor liberty, nor property of their subjects was secure. Since their time, however, the principles of government had been more fully canvassed, and were better known. The ideas of men had changed ; and they would not be content with the same measure of freedom which had satisfied their ancestors. But while, for these reasons, we cannot blame the English nation for desiring more liberty ;—it were unjust, greatly to condemn Charles for endeavouring to retain what he considered as the birthright of his Crown, —and honestly believed for the interest of his people. It had been well for him could he have read the spirit of his age, and yielded, with a good grace, what it was impossible to withhold. But his error was a failure in policy rather than in virtue.

Besides the inherent difficulties of Charles's situation, his natural temper and education unfitted him for struggling against them. For,—not to mention the early impressions instilled into his mind of the

sacredness of kingly right,—he was born with talents, and a disposition, better calculated to shine in private than in public life :—or, at least, to adorn a throne in quiet than in troubled times. His elegant tastes, courtly manners, and domestic virtues, would have made him all that was respectable in a private station, —or the model of a dignified and pacific prince. But he was deficient in the ability, firmness, and vehemence, necessary to control the turbulent elements by which he was surrounded ;—and he wanted pliancy to yield. Had he received from nature the politic cunning of his ancestor Henry VII.,—the brute and reckless violence of Henry VIII.,—or the cool sagacity of Elizabeth :—nay, had he even possessed the careless, unprincipled, and accommodating facility of his own son and successor :—he might have crushed or foiled the growing spirit of his age, and put off the evil day till after times. But, among the qualities of Charles, was a scrupulous unyielding tenacity of what he thought right,—a somewhat narrow sense of his own claims and dignity,—and a stately shyness, which recoiled from familiarity and rude approach. While this temper equally unfitted him for resisting the storm of public discontent, and for bending before the blast ;—it tended to concentrate his affections on those whom he loved ;—and excited, in return, among all who were admitted to his intimacy, the most enthusiastic and devoted attachment.

Of those distinguished by his favour, the most eminent were Sir Edward and Lady Herbert :—so that, on the breaking out of the troubles, none were more zealous

in the royal cause. The good sense of Sir Edward disposed him to moderate counsels;—but such was his habitual veneration for the King, and horror at what he deemed the unnatural disloyalty of his subjects,—that he was prevented from exercising the native justness of his intellect; or urging measures that were distasteful to Charles. At length, all compromises having failed, recourse was had to arms; and the kingdom was delivered up to the miseries of civil war.

Sir Edward Herbert was now one of the most active and prudent of the King's adherents in battle, as he had formerly been in council. His estates lying in the western counties, where the disposition was always the most favourable to the Royal Cause; he had the means of raising a considerable force, among his friends and tenantry, for the assistance of Charles.

The first movements in the field were rather to the advantage of the Royalists; but at the fatal battle of Edgehill, they met with a complete discomfiture. In this engagement Sir Edward Herbert greatly distinguished himself; but no capacity or exertion could prevail against the evil fortunes of Charles.

Lady Herbert had still continued to reside in London. She was now the mother of a numerous family,—many of them very young,—with whom it would have been difficult to follow the movements of the royal army;—while a residence at Sir Edward's country seat would have been full of danger (remote as it was, and without defence), in the present distracted state of the country. Her situation in London, how-

ever, was neither pleasant nor safe. Among the sour fanatics who governed there, little delicacy was to be expected towards a woman, however lovely or unfortunate;—little toleration for an adherent of the Established Church;—little favour for the wife of Sir Edward Herbert, and the kinswoman of Lord Strafford. Although her conduct was guarded by the strictest circumspection,—and her correspondence with her husband confined to the ordinary concerns of her house and family,—(a precaution the more needful that their letters were often intercepted),—she was exposed to frequent disturbance from the wilder agitators of the time. She was even, more than once, summoned before a Committee of the Parliament,—“to stand question,” as it was termed, “touching the evil carriage of the Malignants.” Her behaviour, on such occasions, was, however, so strongly marked by dignity, gentleness, and discretion, that no grounds of complaint could be found against her; and the fierce nature of her inquisitors was almost softened to respect and pity.

As the civil war advanced, it became impossible for her to remain longer in London, with any comfort or safety. She lived in fear of daily insult;—besides the risk of herself and her children being detained, as hostages for her husband. She therefore left London, privately, with her family; and, escaping all interruption, joined Sir Edward, who was then with the King at Oxford. She continued to accompany the motions of the army,—residing with her family at the nearest towns,—till the fatal affair of Naseby, which utterly

scattered the King's party, and brought ruin on his cause.

The disaster of that day was chiefly occasioned (as had before happened at Marston Moor) by the headlong impetuosity of Prince Rupert. He urged too far his pursuit after the left wing of the enemy, to which he had been opposed, and which he had routed at the first onset. Before his troopers could be recalled, the King's army had fallen into irretrievable confusion, and the day ended in a total defeat. The King, some time afterwards, took refuge with the Scottish army;—hoping for assistance,—or at least protection,—from the country of his ancestors. But in this hope he was deceived. He was soon afterwards delivered up to his enemies, by the people of Scotland,—in a manner,—and upon terms,—which render this event one of the least pleasing recollections, to a patriotic Caledonian, that occurs in the annals of his country.

On the day of the above decisive action, Lady Herbert was residing, with her family, at the town of Northampton, which is several miles from the field of battle. Early in the engagement, reports arrived, of the most favourable kind for the King's party, grounded on the successful charge of Prince Rupert. These were magnified by every tongue; and the King's adherents were full of joy and triumph, and vengeance on the Roundheads. When these rumours reached Lady Herbert, she was in company with her kinsman, old Sir Thomas Maynard, who had been wounded at the skirmish of Cropredy Bridge, and was still unable

to take the field. When she asked his opinion of the news, he shook his head, and answered ;—" 'Tis fit, " fair cousin, we hope the best ;—but when I think of " Marston Moor, I like not such passages."—Then came varying rumours of good and evil. One bore that the general Cromwell was slain. The next, that the King was unhorsed, and taken prisoner. But, at length, the royal troops were seen flying in scattered parties. Squadrons of the enemy's horse appeared in pursuit. And various symptoms made it too plain, that the King's army had been overthrown.

To the anxious inquiries of Lady Herbert about the fate of her husband, the fugitives who reached the town of Northampton returned doubtful and contradictory answers. He had made himself so conspicuous in the action, that there were many reports about him. It was said, that he had fled with the king ;—that he had fallen in the field ;—that he was wounded, and a prisoner. What confirmed Lady Herbert's fears was, that, on all former occasions of this kind, her husband had contrived to send her private intelligence of his safety. Now,—the day had past over,—and night approached,—and still she heard nothing. She was convinced that he had fallen in the field. He might be wounded, and still recoverable. While she endeavoured to appear cheerful, to soothe and pacify her children ; she privately communicated her thoughts to Sir Thomas Maynard ; and, at the same time, declared her resolution to go herself, that night, to the field, and search for his body.—" I beseech you, " cousin," said he, " think not of it.—Let your faith-

“ful servant Travers go instead.—Would I could go myself.”—“Alas, no!” replied Lady Herbert, “who will persevere like me?”—“Yet bethink you of the dangers which you run :—The straggling parties :—the unlicensed marauders :—the spoilers of the slain.”—“I were an unfit wife for Edward Herbert,—an unworthy daughter of the house of Wentworth,—could dangers stop me in such a cause. Yet, for precaution’s sake, will I take Travers with me.”

At midnight, after seeing her children put to rest, Lady Herbert mounted on horseback, and rode towards the field of battle. She was attended by her servant Travers, the son of one of Sir Edward’s tenants, and, generally his close companion in the field ;—but of late intrusted with the still dearer charge of his wife and children. This had been against her wishes, and she could not forbear saying to him, as they rode :—“Travers, hadst thou been with him, methinks this would not have befallen.—We could have spared thee better than thy master could.”—“Indeed, so please your ladyship,”—answered he,—“it went hard, that I could not attend my honoured master in the battle. I might have done him some service.” Travers led a third horse, with a blanket, and some other necessaries, in case they should find Sir Edward wounded. In this state they reached the field of Naseby.

It was a chill and boisterous night ;—the moon breaking out, by fits, between the careering clouds, which drove over the face of heaven. As they approached the fatal field, they met frequent stragglers

laden with spoil;—and here and there lay a miserable wounded man, imploring that help which they could not give. When they reached the scene of action all was silent. The living array, and the throng of war, had passed on;—and nothing remained but the still and motionless heaps of the dead and dying. The moon sometimes shining out, gave a prospect over the encumbered field. Here, the dead were piled closely together :—there, they had fallen dispersed in broken flight. Here was struck to earth the head grizzled over by age :—there the glossy ringlets of youth lay soiled in blood. Mangled limbs were scattered around,—mixed with the carcasses of horses, gun-carriages, and broken tumbrils. Elsewhere were small-arms, and fragments of feathers and clothing. The spoilers of the dead had now nearly done their work ;—but one or two straggling women still moved up and down, like spectres, among the heaps of slain. Lady Herbert had dismounted; and now picked her cautious and shuddering steps over the obstructed ground. She made up to one of these women, and asked if she could tell where the King's Guards had fought.—“ Aye, gossip,” answered she, “ be'est thou come a rifling too ? ” —“ But i'faith thou'rt of the latest. The swashing gallants were as fine as peacocks ;—but we've stript their bravery, I trow. Yonder stood the king's tent ;—and yonder-about do most of them lye :—“ but thou'lt scarce find a lading for thy cattle now.”

Lady Herbert went, by this direction, towards a rising ground, where the fragments of the royal tent were still to be seen. The dead here lay wedged in close heaps,—indicating that the conflict had been

long and desperate. The opposite combatants had often fallen in mortal struggle,—grasped together in the very attitude in which they had given their mutual death wounds. Here, Lady Herbert, having lighted a lanthorn, began her hideous labour:—Turning over the stiff and heavy carcasses;—touching the mangled limbs;—and gazing on the ghastly distorted faces. Sometimes she shrunk at discovering symptoms of half-extinguished life in bodies which had appeared dead. Sometimes she heard groans, and half-muttered words, which she could not interpret. Her hands and dress were stained with blood. Long did she thus persevere,—but all in vain. Even her faithful servant had advised her to give up the search:—when, as she kneeled beside a dead body, she suddenly felt a light cold touch on her hand, and, looking round, beheld a small dog:—“ Good heavens !” she exclaimed,—“ it is *Fido* !—He may help us to find his master.”—“ I’ll warrant him, so far forth,”—said Travers:—“ If it please your Ladyship to follow him, I will lead the horses.”

The animal (a beautiful Italian greyhound, which always attended Sir Edward), bounded forward,—turning round, from time to time, with a sharp and cheerful bark,—till he led them to a hillock, the sides of which were covered with slain. The dog forced his way between the bodies; and at last stopped where several were lying heaped on each other. He then pushed and tore with his snout and paws,—looking round, and whining and barking with great eagerness. Travers, leaving the horses, dragged off several bodies,—and at last came to one, which they could not doubt,

from the tones and gestures of the animal, to be that of Sir Edward. He had been dispoiled of his cloak, arms, and upper garments : but, on applying the lanthorn to his face, they found that it was he. The body,—covered with many wounds,—was become cold and stiff ; and every feature seemed fixed in the stillness of death. The dog licked his face,—scratched him with his paws,—and used every effort to arouse him :—and when all was in vain, sent forth a long and piteous howl. Lady Herbert and Travers raised the body,—chafed the temples,—applied strong scents to the nostrils,—but without success.—“ Alas !” said he, “ ’tis a lost labour :—All we can offer now is a Christian “ grave.”—“ Peace Travers !—affection never despair—eth.—Methinks I feel warmth about the heart. Let “ us bear him to yonder cottages. We may find help “ there.”

They wrapped up the body in the blanket which they had brought ; and Travers, mounting his horse, supported it in his arms before him. Lady Herbert followed on foot, leading the other two horses. In this way, they reached a small hamlet, the inmates of which had fled at the approach of the hostile armies. They entered the nearest cottage. No living creature was within,—but the embers of a fire still remained unextinguished. These they carefully fed with wood, till the flame revived. They placed Sir Edward on a bed ;—applied warmth to his body ;—rubbed him with strong essences ;—administered cordials ;—and used all means to arrest and restore the fleeting spirit. They, at length, could perceive a change. The vital warmth slowly extended from about the heart. A

feeble pulse was distinguishable, and gradually became firmer. Then he heaved a deep sigh. It was the most grateful sound that ever struck Lady Herbert's ear. Soon after, he opened his languid eyes :—gazed with a bewildered look upon her, as she hung over him :—and, making an effort at recollection, said, in a low and tremulous voice,—“ Mabel,—Is it thou ?” —“ Yes, Edward,—it is I.—Whom else shouldst “ thou think to see, at such an hour ?”

CIV. STORY OF LADY HERBERT.

*Disce virtutem, ex me, verumque laborem,—
Fortunam ex aliis.*

VIRG.

THE wounds of Sir Edward Herbert had been so severe,—and his exhaustion so great from cold and loss of blood,—that he was removed with some difficulty from the cottage near the field of battle, to the town of Northampton. There, however, it was dangerous to remain. The country was all in possession of the Parliamentary forces ; and the consequence of Sir Edward being discovered, would have been his immediate arrest. He was therefore secretly conveyed into Gloucestershire, to his own estate ;—but as a residence at the mansion-house would have led to detection, he was carried to a cottage, at some distance, situated in the bosom of a deep glen, and embowered in woods. Here, it was hoped that he might escape the search of

those parties of horse, who, during the siege of Bristol, scoured this western country, and lived at free quarters on the inhabitants, as a penalty for their attachment to the royal cause.

In this retirement he continued to gain strength. Lady Herbert, the better to lull suspicion, appeared frequently with her family at Northampton; and, soon after, ventured to remove them further west, to Oxford. From this place, she often visited the cottage, to watch over her husband's recovery;—making her journeys by night, attended by the faithful Travers. On one of these occasions, as they approached the cottage, towards morning, they were alarmed by perceiving, strewed on the narrow path which led into the glen, fragments of feathers, silk, and men's apparel. As they came nearer, they saw the cottage-door standing open. Lady Herbert hastily dismounted, and entering, found all within empty and silent. The furniture, with some musical instruments and papers, lay broken and scattered about. Every thing bore the marks of dilapidation and violence. "Good Heavens! Travers," cried she,—“What hath befallen?”—“Alas! I fear me, that the Roundheads have come down, and surprised him:—but I will run to Gabriel's cottage, and inquire. Will your Ladyship be pleased to tarry here till I return?”—“Nay, Travers, methinks I were better go with thee.”

They soon reached the old forester's mansion, situated farther up the glen,—where their fears were confirmed. “Alas! Lady,” said the old man, “I think there be some false heart that hath betrayed him;—

“ or, at least-wise, a shrewd mischance must needs have discovered his retreat to the rebels. For at yestern-even-tide we saw troopers passing through the trees ; —and soon they fell into the path leading towards the cottage. My son Ned, (mine honoured Master’s Godson, so please your Ladyship), ran through the bushes, to get before them, and give the alarm ; but he was too late. They had already seized upon the cottage, and Sir Edward was in their hands. When Ned ventured near, they let fly some bullets at him ; and one took the tuft off his cap. As soon as they departed, we ran to the cottage, but found all gone.” —Did you note which way they took ?”—said Lady Herbert.—“ We were all on the watch,—so please your Ladyship,—but durst not go near. However, to our thought, they made towards Cirencester.” —“ They must be for London,” replied she, “ and thither will I follow.”

Lady Herbert hastened towards London,—taking the town of Oxford in her way,—where she saw her children,—and settled how they should be cared for in her absence. On her arrival in London, she found that Sir Edward had been committed to the Tower. Many were the intercessions used,—and many the repulses suffered,—before she could prevail with the fierce and fanatic rulers of that time to allow her admission to her husband. But what will not be accomplished by persevering love ? She, at length, through the influence of Mrs Claypole, Cromwell’s daughter, (who was secretly attached to the Royal cause), succeeded. She found Sir Edward languishing under sickness and

pain. His sudden journey, while scarcely recovered from his wounds, had brought on a relapse; and this had been little alleviated amidst the neglect and hardships of a prison. His spirits were revived by the presence of his wife: but there was still room for cruel anxiety, both for himself and the public cause. Lady Herbert shared in those fears; but endeavoured to disguise them; and discharged the hard task of feigning hope which she could not feel. In the midst of these distresses, a day was fixed for Sir Edward's trial. This news affected his wife far more deeply than him. His heart rose, in his own vindication, and in scorn of his oppressors. She looked forward to the result,—and expected neither justice nor mercy. The remembrance of Lord Strafford occurred to them both:—but Sir Edward burned to emulate his noble constancy:—Lady Herbert thought of his fate, and trembled.

On the particulars of the trial it is needless to enlarge. It was conducted, as such proceedings too often are in factious times;—where the accusers are judges, and the accused are pre-condemned. Suffice it to say, that Sir Edward was charged with misleading the King by false counsels, and maintaining and abetting him in arms against his people. He was found guilty of treason, and sentenced to die.

The dreadful interval which ensued was employed by Lady Herbert in unavailing supplications for pardon. The charitable Mrs Claypole again interfered,—but without success. At length,—rendered at once

inventive and desperate by the approaching danger,—Lady Herbert meditated her husband's escape. She began by despatching Travers to her family,—with instructions to have them conveyed privately to France. He was directed to return, immediately afterwards, to the little seaport of Folkestone,—to engage a boat,—and to remain there, till joined by his master. Lady Herbert then, profiting by her free communication with the Tower, declared that she intended to remain out all night ; and, exchanging clothes with her husband, dismissed him, towards evening, in her place. She herself went to bed, on pretence of sickness ; and thus remained unsuspected, in room of Sir Edward, till next morning.

The stratagem was successful, and Sir Edward escaped to France. His wife's situation, however, was now far from agreeable. The ruling faction,—thus robbed of their prey, when already within their grasp,—wreaked all the vengeance of low and exasperated minds on her who had caused their disappointment. Her imprisonment was close and severe ; and was only relieved by an occasional summons for examination before Committees of those in power. When questioned as to her treasonable designs :—" Alas, Sirs !" replied she, " I had no design but to save my husband ;—and that was surely loyal. Which of you, " on such enforcement, would have done less ?"

After some months confinement, the Puritans—feeling that the persecution of a noble and virtuous woman only brought discredit on their cause,—although they would not openly authorize her release,

gave orders that her escape should be connived at. But she was, at the same time, given to understand, that she must urge her departure from England, with the strictest speed,—as it would be necessary to make some show of pursuit, to satisfy their zealous adherents. She was accordingly permitted to leave the Tower; and proceeded, on horse-back, towards the coast, with a single attendant. She took the road through Sussex; keeping to the westward, as less liable to discovery than the nearer communications with France; and reached, towards evening, the small fishing-town of Seaford, near Beechy Head. To escape all remark, her attendant stopped on the outskirts of the village, and returned with the horses, by a different road, to London. Thus left alone, she knocked at the door of a fisherman's cottage. The man opened it himself, and she asked him if she could get a boat to pass over to France. "A boat to France!" replied he,—“Why, not to-night sure?”—“Yes, good friend,—to-night,—if it be possible:—My occasions brook no delay.”—“Why there is nought but a light wherry afloat, no bigger than a cockle-shell.—You had better tarry till morning.” Here the fisherman's wife, overhearing a female voice, came out with a child in her arms, and several hanging about her.—“It were a crazy thing,” said she, “to go afloat to-night.—Thou shalt do no such, Jacob.”—“Peace wench!”—cried he, “Sure I am old enough to answer for myself.”—“Indeed friends,” said Lady Herbert, “I am loth to trouble you. Yet it is very needful I should go to-night, if you will aid me so far. My strait is great, or I would

not ask you."—This was spoken with such a voice and manner as gained upon these rude but kindly people. "—Jacob," said the woman, "she seemeth a noble Lady;—and many such are sore pressed in these times.—Thou must e'en do her will.—But, Lady, wilt thou not consent to tarry all night in our poor house?—They will take thee betimes in the morning."—"I pray thy excuse, my good dame,—though with thanks for thy kindness. It is a heavy need which urgeth me to be gone, and therefore I do entreat both your furtherance."—"Then Jacob," said the woman, "thou must needs go. Hie thee down to the point, and get Will Roberts to help thee."

While the fisherman was away, Lady Herbert remained with his wife,—and completely gained the poor woman's heart, by her sweet and condescending manner towards herself and her children. This is a subject on which two mothers are never at a loss for conversation, however strangers to each other,—or different in rank or circumstances. At length the man returned, and told them that all was ready. Lady Herbert, attended by the good woman and her children, went down to a little creek, where the boat was lying. Here, another man stood waiting for them; and she took an affectionate leave of her humble companions; who in return, put up prayers, for her safety. She then stepped aboard. At this moment, a thought came across her mind, of her defenceless situation,—embarking thus with two men, strangers to her, and rude in their habits of life. But another moment reassured her. She breathed a silent

appeal to Heaven,—and trusted to its protection. She read in the weather-beaten faces of her attendants their honest and simple hearts ;—and saw that she had nothing to fear. Indeed they regarded her with the reverence due to a superior being ;—and would have hazarded their lives to protect her from insult.

The night was dark and squally : rain began to fall : and towards morning there came an adverse breeze, which raised such a sea, as tossed their little barque to and fro, and covered them with the spray. The men pulled with vigour, but made little progress : And as day broke, and the gale abated, they found themselves involved in a heavy mist, which made them uncertain of their course. At length, however, as the mist cleared away, they were relieved by a prospect of the coast of France ; and, after a tedious and stormy passage, reached in safety the little port of Fescamp in Normandy. Here Lady Herbert took leave of her hardy conductors,—with many thanks, and a liberal reward for their labour ;—and immediately set out to join her family at Paris.

This meeting was to Sir Edward, and her children, equally pleasing and unexpected ;—for during her imprisonment, all intercourse by letter had been forbidden ; and they were full of apprehensions about her fate, at the very moment when she appeared before them. Her joy, at this reunion was, however, cruelly damped, by the appearance of her husband ; whose pale and emaciated looks showed that his health had rather lost than gained since they parted. Indeed his anxiety for her situation,—accompanied with a sense of blame

on himself as its cause,—had kept his mind in a state of constant disquiet, and aggravated his bodily ills. Though he improved a little on her return, the relief was but transitory; and it became apparent that his life was ebbing fast away. His wife marked the fatal symptoms;—but, amidst her anguish, preserved an external composure. Every effort of skill or tenderness was tried in vain. And, in four months after Lady Herbert had joined her husband, he expired in her arms.

The trials of this noble-minded woman had hitherto been those of active exertion. The fate which now awaited her was perhaps more difficult to bear,—a long unvarying course of exile, dependence, and neglect. Her husband's estates had been declared forfeited. Herself, and her family, were proscribed by the ruling powers. Her only resource was to retire to a small provincial town in France; where, by the assistance of her own and her husband's friends, whose fortunes had partly outlived the public storm, she procured a bare sufficiency for the wants of life. Such assistance was not discountenanced by Cromwell, who had none of the faults of a little mind. Here, she devoted herself to the education of her children:—constantly maintaining in herself,—and instilling into them,—resignation to the will of Providence, and a hope of better times.

Such times were long of arriving; and for the first period of her retreat, sorrows seemed but to accumulate around her. The tragical end of Charles struck her with grief and horror. And some years after,

when the inheritor of his name made a fruitless attempt to retrieve his crown, Lady Herbert's eldest son,—a youth gifted with his father's accomplishments of mind and person,—accompanied his Sovereign to England. He was present at the fatal field of Worcester ; and, after performing deeds of skill and valour above his years, fell covered with honourable wounds. He expired in the arms of the faithful Travers, who had never left his side. With his dying breath he commended himself to his mother ; and sent a ring which had belonged to Sir Edward, to be delivered to his next brother. It bore a head of Charles I., with the legend " ABYDE LOYALL."

At length Charles II. recovered the throne of his ancestors. Among the many congratulations on that auspicious event, Lady Herbert, who was still in France, sent Sir William, now her eldest son, to pay his duty ; and solicit the restoration of his paternal estates. These still stood sequestrated for the public use, and had been placed by Parliament at the King's disposal. But that careless Monarch, who was alike void of gratitude and resentment, paid little attention to the young man's claims ;—and seemed more inclined to appropriate the estates to his own pleasures ; or bestow them on some of the profligate and greedy favourites by whom he was surrounded. Sir William Herbert wrote, in a desponding strain, to his mother. —"What !" exclaimed she,—" Is it come to this?—I " must needs go myself, and lay before his Majesty all " that we have done and suffered in his cause."

Lady Herbert, though now advanced in life, was

still a fine woman ;—and the nobleness and dignity of her manners struck with admiration,—not unmingled with awe,—the polite Monarch, and his gay and frivolous Court. Being admitted to the Royal presence, with two of her sons, she kneeled, and spoke as follows :—“ Your Majesty sees before you the wife of “ Edward Herbert, who perished by the wounds and “ hardships which he suffered in the service of your “ Majesty’s father, that Royal Martyr of blessed memory. You see the mother of another Edward “ Herbert, who died in the field of Worcester, fighting by your Majesty’s side. You see a family who “ have endured long years of poverty and exile ;— “ who, by their loyalty, lost all, save honour ;—who “ now seek but their own, which your Majesty has the “ power to give ;—and who, (should it be given), will “ ever hold it as a trust, to be freely offered in the “ same cause.”

These words,—and the manner in which they were spoken,—moved even the indifferent soul of Charles : but they would soon have been effaced amidst the gaiety and ridicule of his thoughtless companions, had not the better counsels of a Clarendon, and an Ormond, interfered to save the honour of their Master. Through their influence Lady Herbert at length prevailed. She soon found, however, that the Court of Charles was no place for her. It suited neither her manners nor her principles. So, after gracefully returning thanks to the Monarch for his act of justice, she retired to her son’s estate, and sought for happiness in the bosom of her family. Here,—in the enjoyment of domestic peace,

—in the exercise of piety and beneficence,—and the remembrance of former scenes,—Lady Herbert closed the evening of her days. She could look back with complacency on a life, which, though chequered by vicissitude, and darkened with many sorrows, had been ennobled by the highest attributes of our nature,—AFFECTION, COURAGE, and PATIENCE.

THE END.

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